NON-COMMUNICATING ATTENDANCE

W. J. STARROW SIMPSON

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BY

W. J. SPARROW SIMPSON, D.D.

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PREFACE

SEEING that all attempts to maintain the Eucharist as the habitual Sunday worship for all Christians have sooner or later invariably resulted in the practice of non-communicating attendance, it is only in keeping with historic precedent that the restoration of Sunday and daily Eucharists in the English Church should lead to the same result. A universal tendency requires an explanation, and seems to indicate a principle rather than an accident. It becomes important, therefore, that this universal tendency should be studied. The following pages attempt to summarize the evidence; to deal sympathetically with a practice which is supported by the lengthy sanction of East and West; and to give the dogmatic principles which are held to justify individuals in sharing in the Eucharistic Offering without necessarily on a given occasion sharing also in the Eucharistic reception.

Part of the chapters in the present volume have already appeared in the *English Church Review*. But they have been revised and considerably enlarged, while further chapters have been added. It is hardly necessary to say that the present account does not profess to contain more than a summary of the evidence which might easily be very largely extended. For all practical purposes, however, the present selection may suffice.

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NON-COMMUNICATING ATTENDANCE

CHAPTER I

THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST'S HEAVENLY PRIESTHOOD

If the practice of non-communicating attendance is to be estimated aright, it must be approached through the doctrine that the Eucharist is a Sacrifice. Those who do not accept this aspect of the Eucharist are very naturally unable to find any justification for the practice. For if the Eucharist possesses one aspect only, and that aspect Reception, the basis upon which such a practice can be founded is destroyed. And it is of the utmost importance to realize how intimately doctrine and practice are here associated. There are, indeed, some who believe that the Eucharist is an Offering, but claim that the two aspects are only theoretically separable, and that only those can make the Offering who also receive the Gift. With this theory we propose to deal at a later time.[1] But the whole subject of non-communicating attendance cannot be accurately valued apart from a careful study of the doctrine that the Eucharist is a Sacrifice.

[1] See p. 252.

This doctrine must, of course, be ascertained from the teaching of the Scriptures and of the Church.

But before proceeding to these, there are certain preliminary considerations. No one in these days approaches the subject of the Eucharist with his mind a perfect blank. On the contrary, every one of us approaches it with certain presuppositions which are the product of his antecedents and his own reflection. These presuppositions differ, just as our antecedents and reflections differ. But these presuppositions already dispose the mind for or against certain doctrines and ideas. No human being can entirely divest himself of this his mental furniture. The best thing that can be done is to state with all frankness what one's presuppositions are, and to define the sense in which the principal terms will be employed.

1. The first consideration must be: What is meant by Sacrifice? The term cannot be adequately understood in its crude and primitive forms, but in its most developed and matured. Nothing can be understood in its mere beginnings, but in that which it ultimately becomes. Whatever Sacrifice originally denoted, it came to denote in Israel, and this increasingly as the moral and religious capacity of Israel ripened, a propitiatory offering; an offering made by men to the Father, in order to procure reconciliation, on account of sin. This is the sense in which the term "Sacrifice" is here understood.

2. The second preliminary question must be: Is

Christ's Death a Sacrifice? This question we answer, following the teaching of St. Paul and of St. John, with an emphatic affirmative. Nothing less than the conception of a Godward offering, a propitiation for sin, will satisfy the Apostolic language about Christ's Death.

What a Jew understood by propitiation is conspicuously illustrated in the case of Moses pleading to God for idolatrous Israel.[1] Moses is in communion with God upon the mountain. Below lies Israel: dissipated and apostatizing. They have forsaken Jehovah and set up the worship of nature. And God speaks to Moses upon the mountain, pronouncing the judgment of Divine holiness on the sin of man: "Go, get thee down: for thy people . . . have corrupted themselves."

Then followed warnings of retribution: "Now, therefore, let Me alone, that I may consume them."

Then Moses intervenes. He becomes a mediator between God and Israel.

He pleads, first, that the power which has led Israel hitherto will surely lead them still.

He pleads, secondly, that the abandonment of Israel to its fate would make the world sceptical of the providence of God.

He pleads, thirdly, that God will spare the guilty nation for the sake of their godly forefathers, and that He will remember the promises which He made to them. Accordingly, Moses makes his intercession: "Turn from

[1] Exod. xxxii. 7-14.

Thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against Thy people."

And, says the historian, "the Lord repented of the evil which He said He would do unto His people."

Here, then, the Jewish ideas of God's relation to sin are manifest.

The sin of the people has alienated Israel from God, and also God from Israel. The alienation is not only on one side: it is on both. There is a Divine aversion from sin as well as a human aversion from holiness. If there is evil on man's side, there is moral indignation on the side of God.

Sin deserves retribution, which God proposes to inflict. Then comes the idea of mediation. One in human form, himself a member of the chosen race, their leader and natural representative, stands between the guilty nation and God. The mediator pleads. He fully acknowledges that God's moral indignation is just, is fully deserved. He does not attempt to excuse the sin of the people. He will presently himself go down from the mountain and enlist the sympathies of the better half of the nation on the Lord's side; to vindicate righteousness, and to inflict a terrible retribution on the apostates and the immoral. But, meantime, he pleads for the nation, his people, his beloved people. He urges every plea that can be made for the nation's sake. He manifestly sorrows in their behalf. He offers a grief for sin which the sinners themselves do not offer, and at present are certainly altogether indisposed to offer, if not, indeed, incapable of offering.

And the result of this intercession is that God is propitiated. This sorrow of Moses for Israel is accepted in their behalf. The Divine indignation is turned away. The holiness of God is vindicated and appeased; and Israel is saved.

And this saving of Israel is represented as difficult. It was no easy task to satisfy the requirements of the awful Being Whom Moses served. The God of Israel was too sublime in moral glory to be easily entreated. Moses exhausts the resources of human love in his exceedingly noble and selfless pleading for his guilty people. And this self-sacrificing devoted love prevails. God is propitiated.

Now, of course, all this story of an ancient faith pictures God in very human fashion. It is not intended for a moment that God was all justice and Moses all mercy; that God was reluctant to forgive, until by the prayers of a human being His reluctance was overcome. The Jew knew as well as we do that the Almighty loved Israel as much as Moses could. The memorable words elsewhere ascribed to God, when a prophet protested against the Divine treatment of Israel, should never be forgotten. The Almighty is represented as hearing the human reproaches in patience and silence, and meeting them at last with the calm reply: "Thou art sore distressed for Israel's sake. Lovest thou that people more than He Who created them?" It was God Who had endowed Moses with the grace to intercede. That was the other side of the truth. Nevertheless,

Divine holiness means profound aversion from human sin. God does need to be reconciled to the sinful as well as the sinful to God. There is the deepest truth in the principle of propitiation.

And the propitiation of God is not easy. The distance of God from sinful man was felt acutely by the devoutest of Israel in their deepest hours. They could pen the pathetic words:[1]

"Will the Lord absent Himself for ever? and will He be no more entreated?

"Is His mercy clean gone for ever? and is His promise come utterly to an end for evermore?

"Hath God forgotten to be gracious? and will He shut up His loving-kindness in displeasure?"

Add to this the whole symbolism of the Temple courts. The vacant Sanctuary in the midst, shut off from man's approach; the abode of Deity, into Whose immediate presence sinful men could not enter; taught most impressively the sin-created separation between man and God.

Remember also the kind of worshipper whom our Lord expressly approved. It was the man who in the Temple courts stood afar off, and would not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner."[2] "God be merciful," or, as the alternative rendering is, "be propitiated."[3] The idea is exactly what we should expect to find in those courts of the Temple, among men trained in the notions of propitiatory

[1] Ps. lxxvii. 7-9. [2] St. Luke xviii. 13. [3] R.V. margin.

Sacrifice. It implies the Divine aversion from the sinner, and the necessity of propitiating God.

Now, the importance of all this Jewish teaching is for us Christians exceedingly great. For it shows us what the Apostolic writers meant by the word "propitiation." These were the ideas of God, and of His attitude towards sin, in which the Apostolic writers had been trained. These were the general doctrines which occupied their minds. And these ideas they applied to the Sacrifice of Christ. The Epistle to the Hebrews, for example, says that our Lord was expressly sent and prepared:

"That He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God. To make propitiation for the sins of the people." [1]

"To make propitiation": Now, if we recall the intercession of Moses to God in behalf of Israel, we shall understand what to a Jewish mind that propitiation must have meant. It assuredly meant no less than this: that it was a Godward work; that Christ pleaded to God for humanity just as Moses pleaded to God for Israel. It conceived of God as alienated from sinful man, and full of righteous indignation at man's apostasy. It conveyed the idea that mankind was in a spiritually desperate state, under Divine condemnation and displeasure. It meant that the Almighty was so constituted that by His very nature He could not, without falsifying His character, view sin otherwise than with the strongest aversion and detestation.

[1] Heb. ii. 17.

It meant that a Mediator must be found. Just as God in His goodness provided Moses to be mediator for Israel, so He provided Christ to be Mediator for the whole human race. Just as God endowed the great legislator with those noble powers of selfless patience and pity, and put into his mind the very pleas which God could accept in behalf of Israel: so God the Father has sent the perfect Man, and filled that perfect human mind with perfect love for man and perfect love for the Father; making Him thereby the true and proper Representative and Head of the human race; enabling Him to concur absolutely with the Father's judgment on the sin of man, and at the same time, for that very reason, to grieve perfectly for that sin. Thus there is no conflict between Christ and the Father. The Father is not all severity, and Christ all love. The Father does not resist the pleading of the Son until at last, by the Son's persevering entreaties, a reluctant forgiveness is extorted from Him. These travesties of propitiation are as disastrous as they are incredible. Nevertheless, just as Moses pleaded with God for Israel, so did Christ plead with Him for mankind. And the manner of His propitiation was this: the Man Christ Jesus offered a perfect sorrow for the sin of the human race.

In the theology of the Apostles it is clear that the Father takes the initiative; but the Man Christ Jesus is the Propitiation. "Whom God set forth to be a Propitiation, through faith, by His Blood."[1] It is

[1] Rom. iii. 25.

sometimes said that if God provided the Propitiation He must have been already propitiated. But it should rather be said that just as He furnished Israel in the person of Moses with the power to make its own propitiation, so He did for the world in the Person of Christ. Certainly God must take the initiative; else propitiation is impossible. But that He takes the initiative does not render propitiation superfluous. But what did the Apostles mean by propitiation? We have already seen what as Jews they must have meant. Modern exegesis is increasingly converging in agreement that propitiation must signify either a sacrifice of propitiation or an instrument of propitiation.[1] If the term "propitiation" does not by itself involve the idea of sacrifice, that idea is introduced by the words, "a Propitiation by His Blood." Jesus Christ is represented by St. Paul as the Offering which propitiates.

He is compared in the Hebrews to the propitiatory Sacrifice of the Day of Atonement. The principle that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins" is definitely applied to the Blood of Christ. The Divine forgiveness is the result of this propitiation. Thus, while it is true that the biblical teaching of reconciliation verbally supports only the idea of a changed relation of man towards God, the biblical teaching about God and Christ, taken as a whole,[2] supports also the idea of a changed relation of

[1] Prat, "La Théologie de St. Paul," i. 282.
[2] *Cf.* Sanday and Headlam, on "Romans."

God towards man. In other words, the idea of reconciliation is mutual.

3. The third question to be asked must be: Is Christ's Sacrifice past or perpetual? The answer to this will vary according as men take an outward or an inward point of view. Regarded as an outward event, a mere historical incident in a chronological series, Christ's Sacrifice, meaning the experience of Death, is of course a matter of the past, finished as a fact almost two thousand years ago. But regarded as an inward and spiritual condition, of self-surrender, of moral homage, of will, it must be an abiding state of Christ's human character; something which in the very nature of things cannot possibly be conceived as coming to an end so long as sin remains.

4. Next to these comes the question: Does Christ offer in Heaven?

The answer to this depends on the nature of the heavenly Priesthood of Christ.

Our knowledge of Christ's work as a Priest in Heaven is largely derived from the Epistle to the Hebrews, where a parallel is drawn between it and the Jewish ceremonial on the Day of Atonement. We begin, therefore, with biblical exposition.

The very construction of the Jewish Temple was deeply symbolical. There was the great court in which the altar stood, and the congregation assembled. There was the sanctuary, of which the central shrine was the Holiest Place. The former represented earth, the latter Heaven.

"The most Holy Place was the abode of the unapproachable holiness of God, and was therefore closed not only against all the people, but against all the priests as well; the high priest alone being ever allowed to enter it, and he only on this particular day."[1]

Corresponding with these two parts of the Temple area were the two parts of the priestly work on the Day of Atonement. The first part was that which was transacted at the altar; the second that which was transacted in the Holiest Place. First, then, the high priest slew the sacrificial victim at the altar in the open court;[2] secondly, he passed through the veil into the Holiest Place, with the blood of the sacrifice which had been already slain, and sprinkled the blood upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat seven times.[3] Now, this sprinkling is the act of reconciliation. It is called in verse 20, "reconciling the Holy Place." The sprinkling of the blood is before God. It is an offering of the blood within the Holiest Place.[4]

Thus the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews interprets the old ceremonial: "Into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, *which he offered* for himself and for the errors of the people."[5]

Now, of these two parts of the Jewish high-priestly office of reconciliation, the first action at the altar, that is to say, the actual death of the victim, is in itself

[1] Kurtz, "Sacrificial Worship of the Old Testament," p. 390.
[2] Lev. xvi.
[3] Lev. xvi. 14.
[4] Dillman, p. 530.
[5] Heb. ix. 7.

incomplete.[1] It is with a view to the second action within the Holiest Place. It is the presentation of the blood within the Holiest Place which makes the death effective, because this actualizes the reconciliation. This presentation, therefore, is the highest action, the supreme and final action, which makes the sacrifice complete. Unless this offering of the Blood within the Holiest Place was made, the sacrifice itself was practically ineffective.

The high priest did not take a new offering into the Holiest Place; nor was it a specifically new act upon which he was therein engaged, but it was essentially the very same in which he had been engaged at the altar in the outer court.[2] The purpose of the sprinkling of the blood was propitiatory. It was sacrificial. It continued the process of the death in the outer court. His action in the Holiest Place was not the mere appeal to a sacrifice and offering already completed elsewhere.

Now, the Epistle to the Hebrews parallels this double action of the high priest on the Day of Atonement with the work of Christ. The two parts of the former religious action correspond with the two parts of the latter. Just as the Levitical high priest discharged his propitiatory duties partly at the altar and partly in the Holiest Place, so Christ wrought His propitiation partly on earth and partly in Heaven. As the Levitical high priest slew the sacrifice at the

[1] *Cf.* Riehm, "Der Lehrbegriff des Hebräerbriefes," p. 530.
[2] Thalhofer, "Das Opfer," 1870, p. 208.

altar, so Christ died as Victim on the altar of the Cross. As the Levitical high priest offered the blood of the sacrifice as an act of propitiation within the Holiest Place, so Christ offered His own Blood in the presence in Heaven. This is the parallel drawn by the writer of the Epistle. If Christ's Propitiation was completed on earth, while the Levitical propitiation was completed in the Holiest Place, the relation would be one of contradiction and not of parallel. For the offering within the Holiest Place was not an indifferent detail in the Levitical propitiation, but its very centre and its essence. The offering at the altar was with a view to the offering in the Holiest Place. If the parallel holds, the same must be true in the case of Christ.

Now, when the Epistle to the Hebrews draws this parallel it lays stress on the idea that the high priest did not enter the Holiest Place without sacrificial blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people.[1] He offered the sacrifice within the Holiest Place. That is the point.

According to the article on "Sacrifice" in Hastings' "Dictionary of the Bible," by Dr. Paterson of Aberdeen, the parallel is as follows:

"Even as the high priest entered the Holy of Holies, bearing with him sacrificial blood, which he offered for himself and the people (ix. 7), so Christ entered heavenly places 'through His own Blood,' or to present His Sacrifice before God (ix. 11, ff., v. 23)."[2]

[1] Heb. ix. 7. [2] Hastings' "Dict. Bible," *s.v.* "Sacrifice," p. 345.

From this representation it would appear that the vital moment of the Sacrificial act was the presentation of His Blood.

The principal passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews bearing upon this great subject are the following:

(1) (Heb. ii. 17.) "Wherefore it behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people."

In this passage stress is laid first on Christ's training for the priesthood, secondly on His exercise of the priesthood. The training which qualifies Him for the priesthood consists in His earthly experience of being made in all things like unto His brethren. But this experience includes the earthly sufferings. It includes the death. Thus the death is here regarded as part of the training which qualifies Him for the exercise of His priesthood. Accordingly, in this passage taken by itself, the exercise of His priesthood and the making propitiation are regarded as Christ's function in Heaven rather than on earth. And this view of Christ's priesthood agrees with the Levitical analogy.

(2) (Heb. iv. 14–16.) The conception in this passage is that we Christians now possess a great High Priest; Who has passed through into the highest Heaven and resides there permanently; Whose earthly experiences endow Him with peculiarly human sympathy. On

the ground of this abiding presence in Heaven of Christ the High Priest so qualified, we are exhorted to come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy from God, and may find grace to help us in time of need. This reception of mercy from God is not merely grounded on a past act of Christ, but on His present and continuous high-priestly work in Heaven. The receiving mercy from God is based on the present intercession of Christ.

(3) The statement (in Heb. vii. 27) that mankind requires a high priest "who needeth not daily, like those [Jewish] high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people; for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself," does not deny that the one Offering is a perpetual offering. The "once for all" denotes the completeness as contrasted with Jewish inadequacy, and oneness as contrasted with Jewish multiplicity.

Similarly, when the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of Christ's Sacrifice as being made "once for all when He offered up Himself"[1] as an offering in the past; or when it says, that "He, when He had offered one Sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God";[2] what is really in the sacred writer's mind is the contrast between the multiplicity of the Jewish sacrifices and the oneness of the sacrifice of Christ. It is the idea of its uniqueness, not of its remoteness, of its completeness, not of its cessation, that he desires to impress. Nor must we take the

[1] Heb. vii. 27. [2] x. 12.

phrase, "sat down on the right hand of God," as if it militated against the idea of Christ's continuous priestly exertion in Heaven. For to do so would make the writer contradict his own teaching about our Lord's heavenly intercession. The Epistle to the Hebrews does not say that Christ no longer offers His Sacrifice.

Just as the sacred writer says that Christ "once for all" offered Himself upon the Cross,[1] so he says that Christ "once for all" entered into the Holy Place.[2] Certainly, in the second case, the once for all signifies the finality of the entrance, not the cessation of the Offering which that entrance implies.

(4) A fourth important passage is Heb. viii. 1–3 and the following. Few have analyzed this passage more clearly than Delitzsch:

"The chain of the argument appears to be as follows: Christ is Priest in the heavenly archetypal sanctuary (verses 1 and 2); for there is no priest without some sacrificial function (verse 3); and if here on earth, He would not be a priest at all (verse 4), where there are priests already who serve in the typical and shadowy sanctuary (verse 5). The priestly functions of Christ, therefore, must be discharged in a higher sphere; and so it is. His sacerdotal ministration is as far exalted above that of the law as the New Covenant, of which He is the Mediator, is superior to the Old Covenant, to which the earthly sanctuary belongs (verse 6). This connection of thought is clear and consistent, if we bear in mind that verses 3–6 are the proof of the thesis in verses 1 and 2;

[1] Heb. vii. 27. [2] ix. 12.

and that to minister (λειτουργεῖν) and to offer gifts and sacrifices (προσφέρειν δῶρά τε καὶ θυσίας) express for our author identical or at least closely related and inseparable notions."[1]

This connection of thought is, as Delitzsch says, clear and consistent if we bear in mind two facts: first, that verses 3 to 6 are the proof of the doctrine affirmed in verses 1 and 2; secondly, that the terms "to minister" and "to offer" are for the author of the Hebrews identical ideas; or, if not identical, at least closely related and inseparable conceptions. Thus the minister of the Sanctuary (verse 2) is the official who has somewhat to offer (verse 3). The Levitical minister of the Sanctuary was the priest whose function it was to make the offering within the Sanctuary. Thus the statement (in verse 6) that Christ "hath obtained a ministry" in the Holiest Place is equivalent to or inseparable from the statement (in verse 3) that "it is of necessity that this High Priest have somewhat to offer." And the inseparable connection of these two terms, "to minister" and "to offer," is confirmed by their intimate association in x. 11, "every priest standeth . . . ministering and offering."

In fact, says Delitzsch, the whole paragraph (verses 1–6)[1] consists of two syllogisms:

"(*a*) A priest's office is to offer sacrifice; Christ is a Priest. Therefore Christ must have something to offer.

"(*b*) The sphere is which Christ's priestly office is discharged must be either an earthly one or not; an earthly

[1] Delitzsch on "Hebrews," vol. ii. p. 26.

one it cannot be, inasmuch as on earth (in the material tabernacle) there are other priests officiating according to the Law. Therefore Christ's sphere of priestly operation must be an unearthly, *i.e.* a heavenly one." [1]

This interpretation, as Delitzsch observes, is resisted in certain quarters because it rests on the assumption of a continuous heavenly offering on the part of our Lord.[2] And this conception of a continuous heavenly offering is resisted as contradicting the oneness of Christ's offering made once for all, which is the very point which distinguishes Christ's Offering from the perpetually repeated offerings of the priesthood of Israel. Accordingly, for these reasons, it has been proposed to supply the word "was" instead of "is" in the words of verse 3, "wherefore it is necessary that this high priest also have somewhat to offer." "It *was* necessary" will then refer to the past Sacrifice of the Cross, and not to any present Offering now in Heaven. Or else it is proposed, if the rendering "it *is* necessary" is retained, to give the passage a logical rather than an historical interpretation; to lay stress on the tense of the word "to offer" as signifying something past, and to understand the sentence to mean that it is logically necessary that Christ had something to offer in His Sacrifice on the Cross.

To this view, however, Delitzsch replies that the sentence itself is grammatically capable of either interpretation, and that the question is one which subject

[1] Delitzsch on "Hebrews," vol. ii. p. 26. [2] Page 26.

and context must decide. Taken in connection with the drift of the line of thought, Delitzsch considers that there can be no hesitation which is the author's meaning. For

"who, in the present instance, would maintain that the natural conclusion from the premises, that a high priest as such is called to offer sacrifice, would be, that Christ as High Priest must have something which He has already offered, and not rather that He must have something to offer?"[1]

And this present offering in Heaven is required by the Levitical analogy. Christ's offering in the Heavenly Sanctuary is contrasted with the offering of the gifts and sacrifices by the Levitical high priest in the earthly Sanctuary. The carrying of the blood of the Levitical sacrifice into the Holiest Place is described in ix. 7 as offering. Hence the doctrine of the passage is that the Blood of Christ once shed upon the Cross is brought once for all before God in Heaven. This is the somewhat which Christ the High Priest has to offer.

The idea, therefore, of the passage cannot be that we have One Who formerly acted as High Priest but has now, on the ground of an accomplished act, retired from active priestly functions, since He sat down on the right hand of the throne. The sense is that His priestly and propitiatory action still continues in the form of offering within the Heavenly presence.

Another and an extremely able writer on this

[1] Delitzsch on "Hebrews," vol. ii. p. 27.

Epistle, Riehm, whose work ought long ago to have been translated, for it is one of the ablest analyses of this Epistle in existence, argues that the aorist tense in the phrase, "*have somewhat to offer*," shows that this does not refer to a *present* offering but to an offering in the *past*. It refers to the Offering of the Cross. And yet he maintains that the context shows that it must have a present reference.

The truth is that while the entrance into the Holiest is in the case of Christ *once* for all, at a definite historic moment in the past, it is nevertheless an abiding, an *eternal self-presentation*. The self-presentation of the living Christ as having experienced death and passed beyond it, is an eternal priestly work.[1]

(5) The passage in Heb. vii. 25, "Who ever liveth to make intercession for us," shows that the whole energy of Christ's ascended life is expressed in mediatorial intervention in our behalf. His life in Heaven is a life of intercession exalted to the right hand of God. He is there engaged in making continual intercession on our behalf (Rom. viii. 34).

"This ἔντευξις will last so long as the final redemption of God's people, that is, the utter effacement of sin and death and sorrow, remains unaccomplished. . . . Its method of procedure is not a mere silent presentation of Himself by the Redeemer before God, but an intercession on our behalf in reference to each individual among His redeemed, and every single case of need." [2]

[1] *Cf.* Riehm, "Der Lehrbegriff des Hebräerbriefes," pp. 534, 535.
[2] Delitzsch, Heb. vii. 25, p. 372.

(6) So, again, on the words in Heb. ix. 11, 12, "through His own Blood," *i.e.* by means of, Delitzsch argues that the proposition denotes mediation (p. 86). Christ as the High Priest of the New Covenant obtained an entrance into the eternal Sanctuary by giving up His own life in Sacrifice.

"Eternal redemption had not indeed been fully obtained before our Lord's entrance to the Father, that entrance being itself the conclusion of the great redeeming Act.

"Nor is any injury hereby done to the supreme and fundamental significance of the Lord's Sacrificial Death upon the Cross, without which this entrance ἐν αἵματι into the eternal Sanctuary would have been impossible."[1]

"The sacrificial action of the God-man was not limited to the moment in which flesh and blood were outwardly separated on the Cross. The glorified Redeemer still continues it in will and therefore in substance."[2]

(7) Again, that Christ "offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14), does not refer to the Cross apart from the work in Heaven. On the contrary, the Offering is made in Heaven. Compare ix. 25, "Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the Holy Place every year with the blood of others"; where clearly the idea of offering is connected with the Holy Place. And the fact that He "offered Himself" is in the tense denoting the action as past and complete does not militate at all

[1] Delitzsch, on "Hebrews," vol. ii. p. 82.
[2] Thalhofer quoted in Delitzsch, Heb. ix. 12, vol. ii. p. 89.

against this offering in Heaven.[1] For the idea is that the entrance into Heaven and the Self-presentation before God is an act once for all complete.[2]

Thus the Death on the Cross is not, taken by itself alone, the self-presentation of Christ in the Holiest Place, but must be connected with the entrance of Christ into Heaven and the completion of His Offering there.[3]

Thus the idea is that whereas the Jewish high priest entered into the earthly Holiest by the blood of others, the High Priest of the New Covenant entered into the heavenly Holiest by His own Blood. Christ's Blood, which is the medium of reconciliation, is carried into Heaven. Whereas the high priest of the Old Covenant purified the symbolic Holiest Place from defilement caused by Israel's transgression,[4] the High Priest of the New Covenant purified the real Holiest Place, that is, the Throne of God and the Heaven itself, from the defilement caused by the sin of the whole human race. Just as the symbolic Sanctuary was purged with the blood of the sacrifice, so the Heaven itself was purged from human sinfulness with the Blood of Christ (Heb. ix. 22, 23).

In Heb. ix. 24 we read that Christ is entered "into Heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us."

Christ's entrance into Heaven is in order to appear in the presence of God for us, and that presence is

[1] Riehm, *op. cit.*, p. 525.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 527.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 529.
[4] *Cf. ibid.* p. 523.

perpetual: it is not for a brief interval, but continuous. He does not leave the Holiest Place, but is perpetually there as High Priest.[1]

Now, the Levitical high priest was a mediator during the whole of his brief sojourn within the Holiest Place. He was engaged in the work of reconciliation. So also is Christ in Heaven, not merely at the moment of His entrance, engaged in mediatorial offering for us. He is there for us: in our behalf (ix. 24), as minister. Christ appearing in the presence of God for us is the reality of which the appearing of the high priest in the Holiest was the shadow. And the one is propitiatory like the other.

And this is why the Ascension occupies so important a place in the theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews; precisely because it is regarded as the High Priest's entrance into the Holiest for the purpose of consummating His redemptive work.

It will be noticed that this exposition is very largely derived from Lutheran writers.

Luther himself taught that Christ offers Himself to the Father in Heaven.

"In His invisible office He intercedes for us with God in Heaven, and there offers Himself, and performs all the duties of a priest; as Paul describes Him to the Hebrews under the figure of Melchisedec."[2]

The method of interpretation commonly adopted by

[1] Thalhofer, "Das Opfer," 1870, p. 209.

[2] Wace, "Luther's Primary Works:" "On Christian Liberty," p. 114.

those who reject the doctrine of Christ's continuous Sacrifice in Heaven is to collect all the Scripture passages in which the session of Christ is mentioned, to show that they are numerous, and to place the greatest emphasis on the idea of enthronement and glory. It is then claimed that Christ's heavenly session is a proof that His Propitiation is past. For Christ is now seated at the right hand of God, and that is not the attitude for propitiation.

Now, it might be readily answered, Neither is it the attitude for intercession. And yet we are expressly told that "He ever liveth to make intercession." In fact, St. Paul passes direct from the thought of Christ's session to tell of His intercession in Heaven. Christ Jesus "is at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us."[1]

It is difficult not to see that modern writers who strongly emphasize Christ's heavenly session tend to do it at the expense of His heavenly intercession. The intercession of Christ is constantly reduced to a mere metaphor. It becomes little more than a figure of speech for the silent witness delivered by Christ's humanity in Heaven. No doubt distinguished writers can be quoted for this reduction of the intercession to a metaphor. Nevertheless, it is an exceedingly dangerous method of interpretation. For since we are told two things of Christ's ascended life (the one that He is seated, the other His intercession) it would surely be safer to emphasize both, and to leave them, if necessary,

[1] Rom. viii. 33.

in unreconciled juxtaposition, rather than to utilize the one for the purpose of suppressing the other.

Surely the fact that His ascended life is described under two terms so different as Session and Interceding implies that the spiritual reality here depicted is a complex thing.

What does Christ's intercession in Heaven mean? It is often said that we must not understand by it a verbal intercession; that it does not consist in anything that Christ does; that it rather means the mere presence of His humanity in Heaven, which is of itself equivalent to intercession, being the perpetual reminder before the Father of Christ's work on earth. But there is real danger lest the heavenly intercession should be so interpreted as to divorce it from His personal care for the individuals whom He redeemed. Surely Christ's heavenly intercession must be based on His love of individual souls. When Christ pleaded on the Cross, He pleaded for those who were putting Him to death. But these represented collective humanity, the whole of the human race in a mass. But the question is, Did Christ upon the Cross plead for mankind individually? Did every separate soul of the millions as yet unexistent pass before His human mind with their separate needs? Or was not this pleading for separate souls reserved to be His work in Heaven? Is not this what is meant by Christ ever living to make intercession for us? Is He not now engaged in doing in Heaven for mankind individually what He did on the Cross for mankind collectively? Is not Christ now interceding

for every separate soul one by one? It seems as if nothing less than this can do justice to His redeeming love. It is one thing to take up the case of a family in distress and beg for them as a unity: it is another to distinguish each child with its separate needs. And the latter is the deeper of the two. Surely the same thing holds of Christ's relation to the human family. And the deeper interest is His.

Our Lord's heavenly intercession individualizes every unit in the millions; and pleads for each by itself, almost as if, so to speak, there were no others. But on what ground is this intercession made? Surely on precisely the same ground as His intercession which He made upon the Cross. It is on the ground of His Sacrifice. Yes, but not on the ground of His Sacrifice merely regarded as an event in the distant past, but regarded as a state, an abiding disposition in the present.

5. A fifth inquiry is, Can we offer Christ's Sacrifice or can we only plead it? This distinction is not infrequently made. And the answer is sometimes given that we cannot offer His Sacrifice, but can only plead it, and plead it as a past and finished work. This view clearly militates against belief that the Eucharist is a Sacrifice in the sense already defined. It becomes, therefore, most necessary to consider it, as it is a presupposition which not infrequently lies behind discussions of the doctrine of Eucharistic Sacrifice.

In answer we can only say that the distinction

between offering and pleading seems quite untenable. For let us revert in thought to Calvary. Suppose that St. Mary and St. Peter and St. John entered into the spirit of the Redemptive Sacrifice. Would they only plead what Christ was offering? Or would they not rather unite with Him in spirit, and make Him their Offering? Would they not most truly offer Christ in Sacrifice to the Father? Of course Christ is Christ, and John is John; and Christ is the Lamb of God; but yet John can offer Christ. Of course it is Christ Who dies, and John who is redeemed; but yet the union of the worshipper with the Sacrifice is profound and intimate. Of course it is Christ Who suffers; and yet no one can reasonably say that when John or Mary offered Christ they offered a Sacrifice which cost them nothing. No, indeed; the sword that slew her Son pierced through Mary's heart also; and John offered the costliest Sacrifice that he could make when he offered his Lord.

Now, if the conception of Christ's continuous self-oblation be true, then it was not only possible for the faithful few beside the Cross to offer Christ, it is possible still for all faithful believers to unite themselves with Christ's perpetual Offering and still to offer Him to the Father. The full Christian privilege is vastly more than pleading a remote event: it is self-identification with Christ's present and abiding state.

6. There is one last inquiry which must be made. It is this: Can that which is received be also offered?

The question is evidently not superfluous, for men of conspicuous ability have argued that the Eucharist cannot be a Sacrifice because it is something received. This objection has in many instances obstructed belief in the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

This objection, however, ought to present no difficulty. For Offering and reception are not mutually exclusive ideas. That a thing which is offered to God may also be received from Him would have been evident to any convert trained in Jewish sacrificial ideas. Indeed, if the two notions were incompatible, then it is difficult to see how believers can make any offering to God whatever; for it is obvious to ask, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?"

If the fact that all we have is a gift derived from God does not preclude our conversion of that gift into an offering to the Giver, neither can the fact that the Eucharist is a Gift preclude the possibility of its being also an Offering. The truth is expressed in the Scripture paradox, "Of Thine own have we given Thee."

CHAPTER II

SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE ON THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE

In approaching the question whether the Bible teaches that the Eucharist is a Sacrifice, we notice first that on this, as on so many other subjects, not only does the New Testament contain no systematized doctrine of the Eucharist, but much of its actual contents are incidental passages written to meet a local need. If the Church at Corinth had not been afflicted with liturgical disorders, who can tell whether Christendom would have possessed St. Paul's account of the Eucharist's institution? And certainly his treatment of the subject was determined not by any ideal of theoretical completeness, but by the local requirements of a single important community. The consequence of this incidental character of Apostolic teaching, consisting as it does largely in replies to local Churches, is that we are furnished only with hints and fragments. We are given words from which various aspects may be deduced, and suggestions whose implications may be drawn out. It is this biblical incompleteness which makes systematic treatment difficult. Did St. Paul, when he wrote to Corinth, anticipate that his Eucharistic instruction

would form the guide for many centuries? If he had anticipated this, would he have written exactly as he did? Our duty in any case is to remember that he wrote primarily for his contemporaries.

I

We begin with the injunction ascribed to our Lord: "This do in remembrance of Me." The words do not occur in St. Mark, nor yet in St. Matthew. St. Paul records them, and so does St. Luke.

"This do in remembrance of Me." What first impresses us is the words' simplicity. The next, that we are still disputing what they mean.

Do they mean, Remind God? Or do they only mean, Remind yourselves? Is this action to be perpetuated simply to kindle the remembrance of Christ among men? Is it only a manward action, or is it also a Godward memorial?

A considerable number of modern Christians would probably reply that the Eucharist is intended to remind ourselves. And this answer is undoubtedly quite true. But the question is whether the intention of the Eucharist as a Memorial is exhausted when it has taken effect upon ourselves; or whether it is also a reminder transacted in the presence of God for the express purpose of making appeal to Him. That is the question.

1. Now, it is quite clear that in this, as in so many other questions the two alternatives are not mutually

exclusive. There is no intrinsic reason why an act which is a reminder before men may not also at the same time be a reminder before God.

2. In the second place, the idea of reminding God is profoundly and universally scriptural. We find it in the prayer of Hezekiah (Isa. xxxviii. 3): "Remember now, O Lord, I beseech Thee, how I have walked before Thee . . ." We find it in the prayer of Job (x. 9): "Remember, I beseech Thee, that Thou hast fashioned me as clay." We find it in the constant appeals in the Psalms: (lxxv. 23), "Remember how the foolish man blasphemeth Thee daily"; "Forget not the voice of Thine enemies"; "Call to mind Thy tender mercies"; "Remember me, O my God, for good." We find the watchmen of Jerusalem, or prophets, called "the Lord's remembrancers"; and entreated to "give Him no rest . . . until He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth" (Isa. lxii. 6).

It may indeed be truly said that such language is anthropomorphic. But it is necessitated by the constitution of human nature. It is essential to any religion. It is the basis of prayer. For unless God may be reminded by man, prayer is impossible.

To say that God does not need reminding is precisely a sceptical argument against petition.

Of course it would be a valid objection if the reminding implied a belief that He could possibly forget. But the meaning of such reminding is surely making a Godward appeal on the basis of some fact. God, of course, is perfectly aware of the fact. But still

religion requires that the fact be set before Him, or the action performed in His presence. To say, "Hear us, O Lord, for Thy mercy is great," does not imply that He was not listening. It means that all human appeal to God has to express itself under human limitations.

3. Thus the question before us is not whether it is consistent with religious principles to think of reminding God. That is not really open to dispute. The question is whether this is the true interpretation of the words, "This do in remembrance of Me."

Now here the fact to notice first is that the word translated "remembrance" is not the usual Old Testament word for reminding God. It is not *Mnemosynon* (*μνημόσυνον*), but *Anamnesis* (*ἀνάμνησις*). Unquestionably, this fact is remarkable; and, as far as it goes, seems to suggest that the meaning is reminding man. But this is not all the evidence. For, on the other hand, the word here rendered "remembrance" is employed several times in the Greek version of the Old Testament, and wherever it occurs it means a reminder made before God. It occurs in the biblical title to two of the Psalms, as before Ps. xxxviii., "a Psalm of David to bring to remembrance," where it is understood to mean "bringing to remembrance one's self before God."[1] So again the shewbread is said to be designed "for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the Lord. Every sabbath day he shall set it in order before the Lord continually; it is on behalf of the children of Israel, an everlasting covenant."[2] So again

[1] Gesenius. [2] Lev. xxiv. 7.

it is written: "Ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be to you for a memorial before the Lord." Here, then, in all these instances, the remembrance is a remembrance made before God.

It follows therefore that, although the word *Anamnesis* is not the usual word for reminding God, yet its invariable use in the LXX in that meaning proves that it is only reasonable to suppose it to have that meaning here. It cannot be said that *Mnemosynon* denoted a memorial before God, and *Anamnesis* a memorial before men. The evidence shows that this was not the case. Nor is it likely that the word *Anamnesis* was employed by the Evangelist as meaning "reminding men," not "reminding God."

And further, the two words *Mnemosynon* and *Anamnesis* both represent the same Hebrew original, *Azcarah* (אַזְכָּרָה), which is translated by *Mnemosynon* in Lev. ii. 2, and by *Anamnesis* in Lev. xxiv. 7. In the former chapter the passage is: "And the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon the altar, to be an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord." In the latter chapter the shewbread is to be "for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the Lord." There does not seem to be any difference of meaning between these two instances. The words *Mnemosynon* and *Anamnesis* are clearly used interchangeably. It seems, therefore, that the Greek translators were no more precise in their renderings of the term *Azcarah* than the Authorized English

translation is in many instances. The idea of exactness and precision in the use of synonyms is more modern than ancient. There is no reason to suppose that the Evangelist intended in the term *Anamnesis* to make any closer distinction between it and *Mnemosynon* than the Greek translators of the Old Testament had made before him.[1]

Indeed, the word *Anamnesis* is used in the Epistle to the Hebrews in the sense of a memorial made before God. Speaking of the Levitical sacrifices, the writer says, "But in these sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year" (x. 3).

4. To this should be added another consideration, namely, the nature of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is a solemn liturgical act. Now the question is, How can a liturgical act, based on Christ's Institution, be anything less than an act before God, thereby calling to mind before God the historical Institution, and setting before God whatever that historical Institution itself involves?

In the First Book of the Maccabees, Jonathan, writing to his allies, says, "We therefore . . . do remember you in the sacrifices which we offer, and in our prayers, as reason is, and as it becometh us to remember our brethren."[2]

Here, obviously, the idea of remembrance is that of calling to mind their brethren in the presence of God. It is not by any means simply or chiefly reminding

[1] Delitzsch, in the Hebrew version of the New Testament, renders τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν (1 Cor. xi. 24) by זֹאת לְזִכְרִי עֲשׂוּ.

[2] 1 Macc. xii. 11, μιμνησχόμεθα . . . μνημονεύειν.

themselves. It is remembrance in prayer to God. It is a Godward remembrance. In fact, it is reminding God. And this remembrance or reminding God finds expression in the form of offering a sacrifice. Might not Jonathan have written, "We do this in remembrance of you"?

The truth is that the words, "Do this in remembrance of Me," do not convey to modern readers the sense of offering, chiefly because the modern mind does not possess the sacrificial presuppositions. But the case was exactly the reverse with those minds to which this language of our Lord was originally spoken.

5. It must further be remembered that, since the sentence, "Do this in remembrance of Me," is a Pauline and Lucan expression, which does not occur elsewhere, it must therefore be interpreted in accordance with St. Paul's view of the Eucharist. To which accordingly we must now turn.

St. Paul's comment on the meaning of the Eucharist is that "as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's Death till He come." "Ye do show," A.V.; or "proclaim," R.V.

This is St. Paul's interpretation of the significance of the entire Eucharistic Rite, including Christ's actions and Christ's words. It interprets, therefore, the Lord's injunction, "This do in remembrance of Me."

(1) And here it is to be noted, first, that the New Testament use of the term translated "show" or "proclaim" (καταγγέλλειν) is invariably show or proclaim to men. Accordingly, St. Paul's sentence seems

to confirm the popular impression with regard to remembrance, namely, that it is a manward rather than a Godward idea. Nevertheless, the term itself simply denotes the announcement of news. There is nothing in the word itself to decide whether the announcement or proclamation is made to men or to God. To whom the announcement is made the context must decide. And that is precisely what the context in the present instance fails to do. It will never be possible to determine from this sentence alone that the Eucharist is a proclamation exclusively to mankind. Neither will it be possible to determine from the words that the proclamation is also to God. It is necessary to look elsewhere, and to ascertain what further light St. Paul's teaching may throw upon the meaning of these words, or on the meaning of the Eucharistic Rite.

(2) St. Paul's argument in 1 Cor. x. 14–21 against idolatry led him to compare and distinguish three kinds of religious communion : the Jewish, the Gentile, and the Christian. With regard to the first, he observes, "Have not they which eat the sacrifices communion with the Altar ?" With regard to the second, that "the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God." With regard to the third, or Christian communion, he says, "Ye cannot partake of the Table of the Lord and of the table of devils." Now, it is not only or chiefly that the phrase "Table of the Lord" in Hebrew use (see Mal. i. 7, 12) denoted the Altar under the aspect of reception ; but it is that St. Paul here deliberately parallels Jewish and Gentile

sacrificial rites with the Eucharist, and draws his conclusions accordingly. This parallelism is one from which persons who did not regard the Eucharist as a Sacrifice would surely instinctively shrink. They would feel that since this is exactly what, in their opinion, the Eucharist is not, being in truth vitally different, any such comparison would be dangerous, unnatural, and misleading. It may, of course, be replied that St. Paul need not have shrunk from such a parallel, since he could not foresee the doctrines about Sacrifice which a later period would ascribe to the Eucharist. But this reply does not really meet the case. For St. Paul had the strongest reasons to avoid confusing his hearers with pagan or Jewish sacrificial ideas. Unless the Eucharist is fundamentally a Sacrificial Communion with Deity, the parallel which St. Paul has drawn would be more misleading than illuminating. Considering the Jewish or pagan antecedents of his converts, the most scrupulous care would be essential not to suggest erroneous trains of thought. No man understood this better than the Apostle conspicuous for his versatility. St. Paul's fearless use of sacrificial illustrations when speaking of the Eucharist leaves no escape from the inference that he regarded the Eucharist itself as an Offering.

(3) That this is St. Paul's belief is confirmed by his other expressions.

For him the Eucharist is "the cup of blessing which we bless"; and this, to a people trained in sacrificial associations, must have conveyed the idea of consecrated

Offering; cf. 1 Sam. ix. 13, "The people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice." The cup of blessing conveys the idea of consecration with a view to offering. The idea of consecration without offering would not be conveyed by the phrase to any Jewish mind.

And similarly, just as "the cup of blessing which we bless" denotes sacrificial consecration, so "the Bread which we break" is also part of the ritual of the Offering. The breaking is symbolical; it is not simply for the purpose of distribution: it is part of the Offering. It is a sacrificial act; cf. Lev. ii. 6, "Thou shalt part it in pieces . . . it is a meal offering." The Body "which is broken for you" does not refer to the Cross, but to the Eucharist. Christ's Body was not broken on the Cross. The reference is to the Offering in the Eucharist. And St. Luke's version is, "given *for* you," not "given *to* you." It is offering and not reception which is the idea. The Body is given for men to the Father.

II

We now come to the central words of the earliest Synoptic tradition: "This is My Blood of the Covenant."[1]

1. Now, here the first question is, What is the Old Testament allusion? For unquestionably the whole language is profoundly Jewish, and filled with Jewish ideas. "Blood" and "Covenant" are terms which

[1] St. Mark xiv. 24.

breathe the very atmosphere of sacrifice. They were as familiar to the Jew of the Apostolic age as they are unfamiliar to the modern mind.

But they are more than a general allusion to contemporary Jewish ideas. They contain a very special and definite allusion to Exod. xxiv. 8, which records the inauguration of the solemn Covenant between God and Israel at the Law-giving at Sinai. The identity of the language shows that a parallel is being deliberately drawn between the great Covenant at Sinai and another. For Moses said, "Behold the Blood of the Covenant." And Christ said, "This is My Blood of the Covenant." It is surely undeniable that this parallel is deliberate. The accuracy of this view seems confirmed by Heb. ix. 20, where this passage in Exodus is expressly quoted and applied as parallel to the offering of the Blood of Christ.[1]

2. Secondly, what is the meaning of "the Blood of the Covenant" in Israel?

The Blood of the Covenant was itself an offering made to God. (See Exod. xxiii. 18, "Thou shalt not offer the Blood of My Sacrifice with leavened bread.")

And the offering of the Blood "has a reference to Atonement. Atonement is indeed the fundamental thought in all sacrifices expressed by effusion of blood."[2] Israel was reconciled to God by the Blood of the Covenant, which was first offered to God, and then applied (by sprinkling) to the worshipper; the

[1] Heb. ix. 14.
[2] Delitzsch, on Heb. ix. 20.

Covenant was by Sacrifice; the Sacrifice was propitiatory; the purpose was forgiveness; and "without shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22).

3 Thirdly, there is the application of this idea, "The Blood of the Covenant," to the Eucharist.

In this application we cannot reduce the meaning to those classes of Hebrew sacrifice which exclude propitiation: and this for several reasons.

Because we must take Sacrifice in its fullest and completest meaning. And that meaning is propitiation.

Because the Blood of the Jewish Covenant was atoning propitiatory Blood.

Because to the original words in St. Mark, "This is My Blood of the Covenant," St. Luke gives the explanatory addition, "which is shed for you" (xxii. 30); and St. Matthew, "which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (St. Matt. xxvi. 28).

If our Lord is the fulfilment of all the Old Testament anticipations, then it follows that His Death is the fulfilment of all the Old Testament sacrificial system, and not of any isolated class of sacrifice alone. Christ's Offering cannot be a peace-offering, as opposed to a thank-offering, or a thank-offering as opposed to a propitiatory offering. It is the consummation of the whole sacrificial system inclusively. And, since that system tended more and more to be founded on propitiation and to be expressed as propitiation, so must it be with the sacrificial work of Christ.

Many will agree with this. But it involves a further

stage. For Christ Himself has united the Eucharist with His Sacrifice. It is of the Eucharist that He said, "This is My Blood of the Covenant." It seems, therefore, that propitiation is inseparable from the Eucharist, because it is associated by Christ with His sacrificial Death.

A parallel may be drawn between the Eucharist and the Passover. But it cannot therefore be inferred that the Eucharist is not a propitiatory Offering on the ground that the Passover was not. This inference is impossible, for Christ Himself is called our Passover, and is said to be sacrificed for us. But nobody would therefore infer that Christ's Sacrifice was not a Propitiation because the Passover was not. Thus the argument from the Passover proves nothing at all, because it would prove too much. If the parallel between Christ's Death and the Passover is consistent with that Death being a Propitiation, so is the parallel between the Eucharist and the Passover consistent with the Eucharist being propitiatory.

III

We ought to go still further into this.

Let us ask what the Institution of the Eucharist meant for Christ Himself?

Remember that while the Institution was undoubtedly the inauguration of a new rite, it was by no means a mere rehearsal or a mere giving directions for future religious services; just as one might go over and

practise the details of a service to be hereafter put into use. On the contrary, the Institution was itself the first performance of the actual religious rite. It was itself the first Eucharist. It was all that any other Eucharist afterwards could ever be. It was the first and, in some respects, the ideal Eucharist. For the Celebrant was the visible Christ Himself, and not a servant. Add to this the further special feature: it was the only Eucharist celebrated before the Passion. What, then, did this Eucharist mean for our Lord Himself? We see that He had set the Institution as close as He could to His Death. He might have inaugurated the new rite long before, under conditions in some respects more appropriate; that is to say, involving far less strain, suspense, excitement, and insecurity on the disciples' part. But He left it to the last. He set it next His Death. Now, is it possible to doubt what occupied the Redeemer's thoughts when He instituted the Eucharist? Quite apart from the suggestions of the prayer in St. John xvii., if attention is confined only to the sentence, "This is My Blood of the Covenant," can it be doubtful that Christ was already thinking of His Death dwelling in His Passion? And, if it was in His thoughts, is it conceivable that He was only giving His disciples instruction about it, and not speaking of it to the Father?

Is it possible to doubt that He was already offering Himself to the Father in that Eucharist? Is it not clear that our Lord was not merely anticipating

His Sacrifice on the Cross, but closely associating that Sacrifice with the Eucharist in which He was now already offering Himself? Christ was exercising His Priesthood in the Eucharist. We must not isolate the Sacrifice on the Cross from the previous propitiation in Gethsemane, nor from the still earlier but most solemn Offering in the Eucharist. It is in the Eucharist that our Lord performed sacrificial actions. That first Eucharist, at any rate, was, like Gethsemane, part of the great propitiation. Christ associated together the Eucharist and the Cross as closely as He possibly could in time, and no less closely in their redemptive significance.

IV

Looking back, then, across the words of the Institution of the Eucharist, stress must be laid, first, upon the fact that they are wholly sacrificial. Secondly, upon the fact that they were addressed to Jews, that is to say, to persons habitualized by lifelong training and agelong antecedents to sacrificial usages and sacrificial terminology. Consequently, the words must have conveyed a sacrificial conception, and that not in some archaic and primitive form, but in the most matured form which that conception had reached in Israel; that is to say, the form of propitiation.

On the other hand, stress must be laid upon the fact that the modern reader has no such traditional associations as the Jew of the Apostolic age. On the

contrary, sacrificial ideas form no part of his mental furniture. The whole usages and terminology are strange to him. The consequence is that he easily fails to do adequate justice to the scriptural words. Words are, after all, only signs. And what they convey must depend not less on the hearer than on the utterer. The words of the Institution were intended for Jews, and implied the presence of the Jewish presuppositions. They were not addressed to the twentieth century afterwards. And if that later century is to appreciate them at their proper value, there must be a cultivation of the historic sense, a recovery of lost presuppositions, without which the true meaning of the original words is not likely to be understood.

To this may be added the testimony of a leader of modern liberal Judaism, Mr. Claude Montefiore, whose commentary on the Synoptic Gospels is of peculiar interest, owing to the writer's Jewish yet independent point of view.

"There can be no doubt," writes Mr. Claude Montefiore, "that the conception of the Last Supper as a symbolic or dramatic representation of a sacrifice, even if not intended by Jesus, was soon ascribed to it and to him, after his death. And as such it was regarded by Mark and by Paul. . . . But the other idea of communion was maintained or developed, as well as that of a sacrifice. And, indeed, the two could pass into each other. For sacrifice and communion to the ancient world are two aspects of the same thing."[1]

[1] "Synoptic Gospels," i. 322.

CHAPTER III

PRIMITIVE BELIEF IN EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE

I

On turning from Scripture to the primitive Church, we find the Eucharist recognized as an offering at a very early date.

1. The Epistle of St. Clement (96 A.D.) describes the clergy as those who have "offered the gifts."[1] Bishop Lightfoot understood the gifts and the offerings as a reference to "the prayers and thanksgivings, the alms, the Eucharistic elements, the contributions to the Agape, etc." The clergy "presented the alms and contributions to God, and asked His blessing on them in the name of the whole body." This, at any rate, involves that St. Clement and his contemporaries viewed the Eucharist as a Godward act, and not merely as a remembrance before man. There is a deliberate offering of the Eucharistic elements to God. It is also obvious that the central offering is that of the Eucharistic elements. Whatever else is offered is in relation to, and in consequence of, these. It should also be remembered that St. Clement draws a parallel

[1] Ch. xliv.

between the Eucharist and the Old Testament sacrifices.[1]

"Already," says Sabatier, "the Elements in the Supper are, in the Epistle of Clement of Rome, presented as an oblation similar to the Oblations of the Old Testament, which were brought and placed upon the altar of God."[2]

2. The document called the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" (? before A.D. 120) speaks of assembling on the Lord's day to break bread: it gives directions "in order that your sacrifice may be pure";[3] and it applies to the Eucharist the prophetic language of Malachi about the pure offering which was to be offered in every place.

3. The Eucharistic doctrine of St. Ignatius (100 A.D.) is clearer, and much more fully given. Of certain unorthodox persons he says: "They withhold themselves from the Eucharist and prayer, because they confess not that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which flesh suffered for our sins, and which in His loving-kindness the Father raised up."[4] These unorthodox persons denied the reality of our Lord's human nature. "Such denial involved a disbelief in the virtue of the Sacrament, which was a means of communion with the divinely exalted humanity of Christ."[5] Thus, says Ignatius, these men "speak

[1] Ch. xli. Cf. Loofs in Hauck's "Encyclop.," i. 45. 15.
[2] "Les Religions d'Autorité," p. 159.
[3] "Didache," ch. xiv.
[4] "Ep. Smyrna," ch. vi.
[5] Srawley, vol. ii. p. 40.

against the Gift of God," *i.e.* His Gift in the Incarnation and the Eucharist. The Eucharist then contains the Gift of Christ's human nature which the Father raised up. Thus it is, says Ignatius elsewhere, "the medicine of immortality and the preventive against [spiritual] death." [1] "Therefore," says Ignatius, in yet another passage:

"Give heed to keep one Eucharist. For there is one Flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup unto union with His Blood. There is one Altar, as there is one Bishop." [2]

Here the Eucharist seems regarded in the light of an Offering made to God. But the language does not determine what the Offering is.

4. That St. Justin Martyr (died 166 A.D.) regarded the Eucharist as an Offering is certain. He drew a parallel between the Old Testament oblations and the "bread of the Eucharist," and applied Malachi's prediction about the pure offering to the Eucharist. His exposition of Malachi is as follows:

"He then speaks of those Gentiles, namely, ourselves, who in every place offer sacrifices to Him, *i.e.* the Bread of the Eucharist, and also the Cup of the Eucharist." [3] Elsewhere Justin adds: "Accordingly God, anticipating all the sacrifices which we offer through this Name, and which Jesus the Christ enjoined us to offer, *i.e.* the Eucharist of the Bread and the Cup, and which are presented by Christians in all places throughout the world, bears witness that they are well-pleasing to Him." [4]

[1] Cp. "Ep. Ephes.," xxv.
[2] "Ep. Ephes.," xx.
[3] "Dial. with Trypho," ch. xli.
[4] *Ibid.* ch. cxvii.

5. The Eucharistic teaching of St. Irenæus (202 A.D.) is very interesting, but difficult, owing to the fact that he is engaged in refuting the theory of the unreality of Christ's human body, and the theory that the Creator of the world is not the God of the Christian. It is surely most significant that Irenæus should attempt to refute these theories by an appeal to the Eucharist. This fact by itself is enough to show how the Eucharist dominated primitive Christian thought. St. Irenæus then teaches that Christ, in the Institution of the Eucharist,

"gave directions to His disciples to offer to God the first-fruits of our creation."[1] "He took that created thing, Bread, and gave thanks, and said, 'This is My Body.' And the Cup likewise, which is part of that creation to which we belong, He confessed to be His Blood, and taught the new oblation of the new Covenant; which the Church, receiving from the Apostles, offers to God throughout the world."[2]

St. Irenæus says that the principle of making offerings to God, the sacrificial principle, has not ceased under Christianity.

"Oblations in general have not been set aside; for there were oblations there" [*i.e.* among the Jews], "and there are oblations here" [*i.e.* in the Church]. "Sacrifices there were among the people" [*i.e.* of Israel]; "sacrifices there are, too, in the Church. The form only of the Offering has been changed."[3]

Irenæus here maintains, in the first place, that

[1] IV. xxix. 5. [2] *Ibid.* [3] xxxi. 1.

the principle of making offerings to God in devotion, the sacrificial principle, has by no means ceased in Christianity. So far from having ceased, it is developed to its completest form. The relation of the Jewish worship to the Christian, as understood by Irenæus, is not one of fundamental contradiction in principle, but of the imperfect to the perfect. The principle of Sacrifice is in Irenæus' view so profoundly true that it is an essential part of the worship of the Christian. There were sacrifices in Israel. There are sacrifices in the Church. The only difference is that the form of the sacrifice is changed. And the change of the form is due to the difference of character between the two religions, since the Jewish worship stood in an inferior relation to the Deity than the Christian, the one being servile, the other filial. But at the same time, the object of worship in both religions is one and the same Lord.

Thus Irenæus has no sort of doubt that the direction given by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount is part of the law of the new religion; that the passage "when thou offerest thy gift at the altar . . . first be reconciled with thy brother, and then return and offer thy gift," [1] is a reference to the "Oblation of the Church," or "Pure Sacrifice," offered in the Eucharist.

Accordingly, Irenæus maintains that the Eucharist is an Offering to God. He says that Christ, in the Institution of this Sacrament, "gave directions to His disciples to offer to God the first-fruits of our creation." [2]

[1] St. Matt. v. 23.

[2] IV. xxix. 5.

"He took that created thing, Bread, and gave thanks and said, 'This is My Body.' And the Cup likewise, which is part of that creation to which we belong, He confessed to be His Blood, and taught the new Oblation of the new Covenant; which the Church, receiving from the Apostles, offers to God throughout the world."

Thus, according to Irenæus, (1) the Eucharist is the new Oblation of the new Covenant; (2) it corresponds in Christianity to the sacrifices in Israel; (3) the Church has received this Institution from the Apostles; (4) offers it to God throughout the world; (5) and this Offering in the Eucharist is the realization of Malachi's prophetic language about the Pure Oblation; (6) and this means the cessation of Sacrifice in Israel, because the principle is transferred to Christendom, and what was formerly local has now become, as Malachi said it would, universal. (7) And this leads Irenæus to consider why the Christian Sacrifice of the Eucharist is distinguished by Malachi as "pure."

He gives as a reason why the Offering is accounted pure the conscience of the offerers:

"Inasmuch as the Church offers with singleness of mind, her gift is justly reckoned a pure gift with God."

He affirms that: "the Church alone offers this pure oblation to the Creator." The Jews do not offer thus. And here he gives the reason. Unhappily, just here, at the critical point, is a serious diversity of text. Either Irenæus wrote: "for they have not

received the Word through whom it is offered to God"; or else he wrote: "for they have not received the Word Who is offered to God." [1]

If the former version represents the great teacher's mind, then the Offering is only of the material elements: if the second, then he taught explicitly that the Eucharistic Offering consists not merely of Bread and Wine, but of Christ Himself.

The argument of Irenæus was this: the Eucharist is an Offering presented to God the Father. It includes the material elements of bread and wine. But these theorists asserted that God the Father was not the Creator of the world. Then, argued Irenæus, if that is the case, to expect Him to accept an offering from the elements of this material creation, would be to represent Him as coveting the property of another Divinity; and desirous of securing what He did not create, and what He had no claim to call His own. If the material world was the product of some inferior Deity, then to offer to the Father such products would be to insult Him rather than to do Him honour. Moreover:

> "How can they be consistent with themselves when they say that the Bread over which thanks have been given is the Body of their Lord, and the Cup His Blood, if they do not call Himself the Son of the Creator of the world?"

This seems a yet further thought. The human nature of the Son of God was certainly derived from

[1] St. Iren., IV. xxxi. 3.

this material creation. Has He, then, appropriated a Body which He did not create? Is it reasonable to say that the consecrated Eucharistic elements are His Body and His Blood, if He is not the Son of the Creator of that material world; nay, indeed, Himself its actual Creator?

Continuing the line of thought yet further still, and pushing it on to its inevitable consequences, Irenæus then turns to the theorists who denied the resurrection of the body:

> "Then, again, how can they say that the flesh which is nourished with the Body of the Lord and with His Blood, goes to corruption, and does not partake of life? Let them, therefore, either alter their opinion, or cease from offering the things of which we have just spoken."

The argument is that the Bread and the Wine are an Offering to the Father. Therefore He must be their Creator. Secondly, that the Bread and the Wine are Christ's Body and Christ's Blood. Therefore, again, the human nature of Christ must be God's creation. Thirdly, that the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ must ensure the resurrection of that human being who is permitted to be its recipient. Therefore, concludes the great writer, either abandon your theory or cease to offer the things of which we have just spoken. What are the things of which he has just spoken? Clearly, they are the Body and Blood of Christ. The grammatical structure of the sentence necessitates this. That is to say, that what is offered

in the Eucharist is not only bread and wine, but Christ's Body and Blood. And then he lays great stress on the immense superiority of this Offering over all the offerings of Israel. There was an earthliness in the offerings of the Old Covenant: there is a spirituality in the Offering of the New. Surely this estimate implies that he is not thinking of the mere offering of bread and wine, but of the Bread and Wine as consecrated; that is, no longer as common bread but Eucharist, consisting of two realities, a heavenly as well as an earthly, that is, the Body and Blood of Christ.

If we may add to this a fragment from a lost treatise of St. Irenæus, the conclusions already drawn are strengthened.[1]

"God must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. Wherefore the oblation of the Eucharist is not carnal, but spiritual, and therefore pure. For we offer to God the Bread and Cup of Blessing, giving thanks to Him that He has commanded the earth to produce those fruits for our sustenance; and then, having completed the Oblation, we invoke the Holy Spirit that He will exhibit this Sacrifice, both the Bread as the Body of Christ and the Cup to be the Blood of Christ, in order that those who receive these antitypes may obtain remission of sins and eternal life. They therefore, who offer these Oblations in remembrance of the Lord do not draw near to Jewish institutions, but ministering spiritually shall be called the sons of wisdom."[2]

The reason why the Eucharistic doctrine of the

[1] Harvey's Edit., ii. 502, "Fragmenta." [2] Page 505.

Fathers is liable to various interpretations is that they are dealing with contemporary disputes, and are not directly answering the questions which we are asking. St. Irenæus is replying to persons who denied that the Eucharistic elements of bread and wine were created by the Deity, to whom the Eucharist is offered. That dualistic theory determined the form of Irenæus' reply. Irenæus is not attempting to answer the questions: What is the essence of the Eucharistic Sacrifice? What is it precisely in which the Offering consists? Does the Offering merely consist of prayers? Is it merely an Offering of the fruits of the earth? Is it an offering of the bread and wine before they are consecrated, or also after they are consecrated? Is it an Offering of the Body and Blood of Christ? These are the questions which modern disputes require us to ask. And to these questions there are, for the most part, only indirect replies. On the whole, it seems correct to say that contemporary controversy led Irenæus to lay the greatest stress on the offering of the bread and wine, but yet that he has not the remotest suspicion that the pure Offering could consist solely in these. On the contrary, he insists strongly on their consecration, and asserts that consequently they are no longer common bread, but Eucharist, consisting of two things, an earthly and a heavenly. Indeed, it probably never occurred to Irenæus that his readers might separate the Offering from the consecration. In any case, Irenæus maintains that the Eucharist is essentially an Offering: an Offering not merely of praise and

thanksgiving, but of the Eucharistic elements. And the emphatic contrast which he draws between the earthliness of the Old Testament offerings and the spirituality of the pure Offering of the New Covenant can apparently only be justified on the supposition that Irenæus is not thinking of the mere offering of bread and wine, but of the Bread and Wine as consecrated, that is, no longer being common bread, but Eucharist, consisting of two realities, a heavenly as well as an earthly, that is, the Body and Blood of Christ. It is true that Irenæus nowhere explicitly affirms, beyond the possibility of critical dispute, that the Eucharistic Offering is the Offering of Christ; but this appears to be the presupposition logically requisite to give consistency to his argument.

6. The clearest primitive statements of the doctrine of the Eucharistic Offering is found in the letters of St. Cyprian (250 A.D.) where he says:

"If Jesus Christ our Lord and God is Himself the Chief Priest of God the Father, and has first offered Himself a Sacrifice to the Father, and has commanded this to be done in commemoration of Himself, certainly that priest truly discharges the office of Christ who imitates what Christ did; and he then offers a true and full Sacrifice in the Church to God the Father when he proceeds to offer it according as he sees Christ Himself to have offered." [1]

No terms can be more explicit. This is acknowledged. It has been customary among Protestant writers to regard this doctrine of St. Cyprian as an

[1] "Ep." 62. 14.

immense advance upon his predecessors. But a careful consideration of the teaching of St. Irenæus shows that Cyprian has, after all, only stated explicitly what the argument of St. Irenæus implied. The difference is one of clearness rather than of novelty. It is difficult to believe that St. Irenæus would have objected to the teaching of St. Cyprian.

This is the impression made by the primitive writers upon so independent an historian as Schaff.

"The Catholic Church, both Greek and Latin, sees in the Eucharist not only a *sacramentum* in which God communicates a grace to believers, but at the same time and, in fact mainly, a *sacrificium* in which believers really offer to God that which is represented by the sensible elements. For this view also the Church Fathers laid the foundation, and it must be conceded that they stand in general far more on the Greek and Roman Catholic than on the Protestant side of this question."[1]

II

If we attempt to formulate a doctrine of the Eucharist, as it appears implied in the Biblical facts, and as it emerges in the consciousness of primitive Christendom, it is clear that the principal aspects are two: there is a Godward and there is a manward side. Primarily the Eucharist is an Offering to the Father; ultimately it is a Gift which the worshipper receives.

The doctrine, then, which we desire to state is that

[1] Schaff, "History of the Christian Church," first Division, p. 530.

the Eucharist is first an Offering to the Father. It is a Memorial before God. It seems really impossible to enact a religious memorial before man which is not virtually also a memorial before God. To assemble for the express purpose of remembering Christ before men, of showing forth His Death before men, in the form of action and prayer before the Father, is surely also to enact a memorial before God.

"The whole of this sacramental action," writes Bishop Gore, "is directed Godwards, to the accompaniment of prayer, and not manwards as a (so to speak) dramatic or instructive action. We have thus a solemn commemoration before God of the Sacrificial Death of Christ." [1]

The Godward aspect cannot conceivably be left out. It is possible that the sharp modern distinction between the manward and the Godward sides of the Eucharistic Memorial, affirming the one and denying the other, would not have suggested itself to the primitive mind. But in any case the Eucharist is essentially a Godward act. The invariable drift of all the ancient Liturgies is that the Eucharist is an appeal to the Father, an intercession before the Father, a remembrance before the Father, of the Passion and Death and Resurrection of Christ.

But the peculiarities of the Eucharist as a Memorial before God consist in two great facts: first, in its relation to Christ's Redeeming Death; secondly, in the reality of Christ's Eucharistic Presence.

[1] Gore, "Body of Christ," p. 175.

The death of Christ upon the Cross is, both in Scripture and in the primitive Christian consciousness, regarded as a redemptive Offering to the Father. It is the one perfect and sufficient Sacrifice. There can be no other, nor can any addition be made to it. It wrought the redemption of the human race as a whole. But this collective redemption must be individually sought and applied. For although ideally the race was saved on the Cross, it must still be actually brought one by one within the scope of that one Offering's effectiveness. Now, Christ's redemptive Offering of Himself to the Father must not be viewed merely as a remote historic incident, completed in all its bearings well-nigh two thousand years ago. Rather it possesses an eternal validity. It is extended over all time. It is an ever-present reality before the Father. All pre-Christian offerings were accepted in relation to it. All Christian offerings are offerings made in union with it. The pre-Christian devotion unconsciously offered Christ to the Father; the Christian devotion offers Him consciously.

The essence of Christ's redemptive Offering is a homage to righteousness, an act of reparation to the Father, made by the ideal Man, the Representative of sinful humanity. Christ on the Cross offered Himself in this sense, and alone, since mankind could not at that time enter into the depth of its redemptive meaning.

But in the Church, humanity, in its right mind, attempts to think Christ's thoughts after Him, and

offers Him to the Father; and, identified with Him, offers itself also; but the latter as a consequence of the former. It is the Offering of Christ which is the central thing. And this Offering, while of course, it pervades every act of devotion, is consummated in the central rite of the Eucharist: for the simple reason that the Eucharist is Christ's own appointed way for the Church to offer Him to the Father; and also for the reason that the Eucharist is the medium of His Presence: more definitely, this is His Body; this is His Blood. Thus the Offering of the Cross is extended into the Offering of the Eucharist. It is not different. It is the same. There is no detraction from the Cross. There is no addition to the Cross. There is an extension of the same one Offering.

It must be remembered that the Eucharistic Offering is not an Offering of Christ as dead, but as having passed through death and living.

CHAPTER IV

AN ANCIENT LITURGY

THERE is no doubt that the central worship of the first Christian centuries was the Eucharist. They celebrated it at the least every Lord's Day. In certain places there were daily Eucharists. It is also quite clear that, speaking generally, those who were present received: although in the earliest period no rule existed to render reception compulsory. It may be that no such rule was needed.

In the account of Christian worship given by Justin Martyr in his "Apology," we are told:

"There is then brought to the president of the brethren bread and a cup of wine mixed with water; and he taking them, gives praise and glory to the Father of the Universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at His hands.[1] And when the president has given thanks, and all the people have expressed their assent, those who are called by us deacons give to each of those present to partake of the bread and wine mixed with water, over which the thanksgiving was

[1] Justin Martyr, "Apology," i. 65.

pronounced, and to those who are absent they carry away a portion." [1]

This, according to Justin Martyr, was the ordinary Sunday worship of Christians.[2]

"There is a distribution to each, and a participation of the Eucharistic elements, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons."

Here, then, two points are clear: 1. Each believer present as a rule received. 2. The Eucharist was reserved and carried to the absent members of the Church.

In certain places there was a daily Eucharist; and as early as St. Cyprian the petition of the Lord's Prayer concerning our daily bread was applied to a daily reception of the Eucharist.

Few documents of the early centuries enable us to picture more clearly in imagination the practices of early Christian worship than the exceedingly graphic regulations in the "Apostolical Constitutions." This collection of ancient rules and practices was compiled before 400 A.D., and probably represents the guiding principles at work in Syria or in Egypt.

The Eucharist, or solemn assembly, was ordered to be held "every Lord's Day." [3] The Bishops are addressed as

"priests and levites ministering to the holy tabernacle, the holy Catholic Church; who stand at the Altar of the Lord

[1] Justin Martyr, "Apology," i. 65. [2] *Ibid.* i. 67.
[3] "Apost. Const.," book v. 20.

your God, and offer to Him reasonable and bloodless sacrifices through Jesus the great High Priest."[1]

Very full and elaborate directions are given for Eucharistic observance. After certain introductory prayers and the words of exhortation, *i.e.* the sermon, have been spoken, a deacon is directed to ascend upon some high seat and proclaim, "Let none of the unbelievers stay."[2] That is to say, that pagans and unconverted persons, who were permitted to be present up to that point, in order that they might gain instruction, were at this point commanded to leave the church. Then followed a prayer for the candidates for Baptism. Then the deacon is directed to proclaim, "Ye catechumens, depart in peace."[3] Thus the church was cleared of the unbaptized, not one of whom was permitted to be present during the celebration of the Holy Mysteries. Then followed a prayer for the Penitents: that is, for those undergoing public penance according to the Church's public penitential system. At the conclusion of this prayer, the deacon was directed to proclaim: "Depart, ye penitents." This must be understood with the exception of a certain class of penitents to whom, as we shall afterwards see, the privilege of non-communicating attendance was permitted. Then the deacon was directed to say: "Let none of those who ought not to come draw near. All we of the faithful, let us bend our knee." Thus from the assembled worshippers were gradually weeded out various classes whom the

[1] "Apost. Const.," book ii. 25. [2] *Ibid.*, book viii. 5.
[3] *Ibid.*, book viii. 6.

Church considered unfit for presence at the Consecration of the Eucharist. Then followed a prayer for the Church. It is very noticeable that children were not sent out. A special notice says: "Let the children stand at the reading desk; and let another deacon stand by them, that they may not be disorderly."

It will be observed that there is no notice that any baptized person should withdraw, except those under sentence of penance. The notice proceeds to add:

"And let other deacons walk about and watch the men and women, that no disturbance be made, and that no one nod or whisper or slumber; and let the deacons stand at the doors of the men, and the sub-deacons stand at those of the women, that no one go out, nor a door be opened, although it be for one of the faithful, at the time of the Oblation."

Then the high priest is to "put on his shining garment," and stand at the altar, and make the sign of the Cross upon his forehead. Then he is to bless the people. Then he is to say: "Lift up your hearts," and the people are to reply: "We lift them up unto the Lord." "Let us give thanks unto the Lord." "It is meet and right so to do." "It is very meet and right before all things to sing a hymn unto Thee. . . ." Then follows the great prayer containing the Sanctus, the recital of the Institution, and the Offering of the Elements to the Father, and the Invocation of the Holy Spirit:

"We offer to Thee, our King and our God, according to His institution, this Bread and this Cup, giving thanks to

Thee through Him, that Thou hast thought us worthy to stand before Thee, and to sacrifice to Thee; and we beseech Thee that Thou wilt mercifully look down upon these gifts which are here set before Thee, O Thou God, Who standest in need of none of our offerings. And do Thou accept them, to the honour of Thy Christ, and send down upon this Sacrifice Thy Holy Spirit . . . that He may show this bread to be the Body of Thy Christ, and the cup to be the Blood of Thy Christ, that those who are partakers thereof may be strengthened. . . ."

Then follows a beautiful prayer of intercession through the Eucharistic Offering:

"Let us still further beseech God through His Christ, and let us beseech Him on account of the gift which is offered to the Lord God, that the good God will accept it, through the mediation of His Christ, upon His heavenly altar."

And this prayer included "those who are departed in the faith."[1]

On the conclusion of this prayer follows the announcement: "Holy things for holy persons." Then, after the Gloria in Excelsis and the Benedictus, comes the actual Communion, when the direction is carefully given as to the order in which people are to receive:

"After that let the Bishop partake, then the presbyters and deacons and sub-deacons, and the readers and the singers and the ascetics; and then of the women, the deaconesses, and the virgins and the widows; then the children; and then all the people in order."

[1] "Apost. Const.," book viii. 13.

There are many important lessons to be derived from this early Christian Liturgy.

1. In the first place, observe that the worship of the early Christian centuries was wholly Eucharistic. This was their weekly service, every Lord's Day. This, and no other than this. There was no rivalry, no competition, between the Eucharist and other offices. It was to the Eucharist that all the people came.

2. In the second place, observe the clearly marked divisions. They are manifestly two: the prayers before the Offering, and the Offering itself. The division between them comes at the words of the "Sursum corda": "Lift up your hearts"; which words have formed part of the Eucharist for at least sixteen hundred years. This division, the prayer before the Offering, and the Offering itself, is characteristic of all the ancient Liturgies, and continues in the Greek services down to the present day. Thus the Offering itself was the centre of the sacred rite. "We offer to Thee, our King and our God, this Bread and this Cup." They were offered, says the prayer, according to Christ's Institution. It was pleaded that God would accept this Offering upon His heavenly Altar; as if the Offering were, so to say, taken up into the heavenly sphere, the service being no longer regarded as simply transacted upon the earth. There is a blending of earth with heaven. And this acceptance is through the mediation of God's Christ. And on the basis of this Offering came the Eucharistic Intercessions, which were made for the living and also for the dead. Thus the

Eucharistic Offering was believed to benefit all men, whether present or absent, whether on earth or beyond it.

Then, when the entire Oblation was completed, came the final purpose of the Eucharist, quite distinct, the reception of the sacred Gift. Thus the two aspects of the Eucharist, the offering and the receiving, were marked and defined with a clearness which cannot have failed to impress the worshipper.

3. In the third place, observe the gradual way in which the mixed assembly were sifted out, until the faithful only remained. First, the pagan and the Jew were dismissed when the sermon was finished. Next, the candidates for Baptism were sent away: for no unbaptized person might see the mysteries. Then the persons under penitential discipline were dismissed.[1] Thus the congregation was subjected to a process of spiritual scrutiny and selection. The faithful only were permitted to remain. But the children were not sent away. Directions were given for their good behaviour during the Eucharist. But there is no suggestion made that any of the faithful should depart. There was no interval in the service to indicate a time for them to go. The Deacon said, "Let none of the unbelievers stay"; "Let the unbaptized depart"; "Let the penitents depart." These three directions are all in the rubrics and in the words of the service. But the deacon was never directed to say, "Let those who do not intend to

[1] With the exception of one single class, who were permitted to remain but not to receive.

communicate depart." The assumption evidently is that all the faithful remained. The idea of their trooping out after the sermon is quite foreign to the spirit of this ancient Christian book of prayer. It would have reduced the believer to the level of the pagan and the Jew, or of the unbaptized, or at least to the level of those who for serious and scandalous misconduct were publicly forbidden to remain. The believer, the ordinary Christian, would not have wished to place himself there. Moreover, the rubric expressly says that the deacons were to stand at the church doors, "that no one go out, nor a door be opened, although it were for one of the faithful, at the time of the Oblation." Clearly, then, the conclusion is that all the faithful were expected to remain at least until the Offering of the Eucharist had been made. If they went out it would not be until after the consecration had been made and the Offering had been pleaded.

4. In the fourth place, Did those who remained also receive? Probably for the most part they did. We have seen the elaborate regulation as to the order in which people were to receive.

In this extremely interesting document we find the practice of giving the Communion to children. They were made recipients, quite regardless of their age. St. Cyprian, for instance, mentions the giving the Eucharist to an infant not yet old enough to speak.[1] St. Augustine bases the practice of Infant Communion on the text, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of

[1] "De Lapsis," 25, 26.

Man and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you." The passage, to his mind, required that every baptized person, regardless of age, should receive the Eucharist. If the objection were raised that Christ, by the very form of the sentence, "Except ye eat," was clearly addressing only those who were of age to understand, Augustine replies that if you take the words and not the intention, you might just as well argue that they only apply to the persons to whom they were spoken. The flesh of Christ, argued Augustine, is the life of infants as well as of grown men, and if infants do not eat His flesh, they have no life in them.[1] Doubtless Augustine's exposition, together with his great authority, must have strengthened the practice of Infant Communion. But, indeed, Pope Innocent I. has been credited with similar teaching. For in a letter addressed to a Synod of Bishops in Africa, in 417, he rejected the Pelagian theory that infant Baptism was unnecessary to salvation by an *à fortiori* argument. For he said, "Except they eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, they will have no life in them." That is to say, that reception of the Eucharist was necessary for infants; much more then was Baptism.[2] And, of course, if infants were communicated, still more were older children. Among the letters of St. Leo the Great (458 A.D.) is one which recommends that children taken captive in war, and

[1] "De Pecc. Meritis," i. 27, 28; "Works," x. 208, 209.

[2] Ep. clxxxii., among the letters of St. Augustine; "Works," ii. 956; Gaume; see Maldonatus on St. John vi. 54.

parted from their parents very young, should be asked whether they received what was given to their parents, in the Eucharist, and if they cannot remember they should be baptized.[1] St. Leo appears to assume that if they had not received the Eucharist it was clear that they had not been baptized.

But this practice of communicating infants by no means proves that such communicating took place whenever they were present at the Eucharist; that is to say, regularly every Sunday, from infancy onwards. There is no evidence of such a custom in the early Church. "The practice of communicating infants survived until the eleventh century."[2] Their occasional Communion is continued in the Greek Church to the present day. But in the Western Church the administration of the Eucharist to infants was gradually discouraged. Arguments in discouragement were propounded by St. Thomas Aquinas (died 1274) in his commentary on St. John. The Council of Trent definitely decided that little children are not bound to Sacramental Communion.[3] And, of course, from that time onwards, Latin theologians have given reasons why the practice should not be encouraged.[4] St. Thomas argued[5] with some embarrassment, being confronted with the Patristic inference from St. John vi. 54 on the one hand, and the decline or abandonment of infant

[1] St. Leo, Letter 167. Migne, t. i. pp. 1208–9.
[2] Van Espen, vol. ii. p. 31.
[3] Session xxi. ch. iv. [1562 A.D.].
[4] See Maldonatus [1583] on St. John.
[5] Commentary on St. John, ch. vi.

Communion in the Church of his day on the other. On the words, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man," St. Thomas observed:

"Since the Sacrament of Baptism is of necessity, so also, it would appear, is the Eucharist. And this is what the Greeks admit, since they give the Eucharist to baptized children. Indeed, in this practice they are supported by Dionysius, who says that the reception of any Sacrament ought to be consummated by the reception of the Eucharist, for this is the consummation of all Sacraments. But," continues Aquinas, "this is true in adults, but not in children; for reception of the Eucharist requires an actual reverence and devotion which they who have not the use of moral freedom (such as infants) cannot experience. And therefore the Eucharist should on no account be given to them."[1]

The Council of Trent determined

"that little children who have not attained to the use of reason, are not by any necessity obliged to the Sacramental Communion of the Eucharist: inasmuch as having been regenerated by the laver of Baptism, and being incorporated with Christ, they cannot, at that age, lose the grace which they have already acquired of being the sons of God."

But it goes on to say that:

"Antiquity is not to be condemned if in some places it, at one time, observed that custom; for as those most holy Fathers had a probable cause for what they did in respect of their times, so, assuredly, it is to be believed without

[1] St. Thomas Aquinas, Commentary on St. John, ch. vi.; lect. vii. ed. 1894, vol. ii. p. 201.

controversy, that they did this without any necessity thereof unto salvation."[1]

The historical value of this assertion is more than questionable. It is clear that Augustine and Innocent I. considered Infant Communion necessitated by our Lord's words in the sixth chapter of St. John. However, on the basis of this view of what the Fathers meant, the Council of Trent proceeded to enact that:

"If any one saith that the Communion of the Eucharist is necessary for little children, before they have arrived at years of discretion; let him be anathema."[2]

It seems, then, true to say that, in the primitive Church, the whole Society of Christians was gathered irrespective of age for reception of the Sacred Gift. The duty of reception was pressed to its logical extreme, so that infants were included. This first stage in the Church's practice was a singularly beautiful one. But experience rendered modifications of the primitive use inevitable.

An appeal to this practice in modern life is, however, rendered difficult, owing to the fact that many who make this appeal are not prepared to comply with the precedent entirely; that is to say, they neither interpret St. John vi. as inclusive of infants, nor do they desire the restoration of Infant Communion. But this exclusion of infants, whatever may be said for it, is a departure from primitive precedent. It shows a determination in modern life not to be wholly guided by the very age to

[1] Session xxi. ch. iv. [2] Canon iv.

which appeal is made. We do not for a moment question the justice of this independence. It is an acknowledgment that the modern Church cannot be entirely bound by ancient practices, but must act for itself. But of course such independence diminishes the value of an appeal to ancient precedent.

Two classes of non-communicants were present in the church: the class of penitents who were permitted to be present but not yet to receive, and this often over a period of years; and the children who had received in infancy and did not receive for years again.

In later times, the number of the communicants decreased: and the curious custom arose among the Greeks of distributing to the non-communicants, at the end of the service, portions of bread which had not been consecrated. It is said that this was done in order to ensure that the congregation, although not intending to communicate, should not depart from the church until the service was ended.

In fact, the directions of this ancient book of Eucharistic prayer placed the people in a position which, if taken seriously, would encourage non-communicating attendance. For, on the one hand, the obvious intention was to secure that all the faithful should remain; on the other, the warning words, "Holy Things are for holy persons," might well come home to conscience, and cause individuals among the faithful, for reasons of their own, to desire to refrain at times from the awful Gift, which might be taken to condemnation as well as to blessing. The more profoundly

they realized the nature of the Gift, the more necessarily at times they must have recoiled from its reception. Indiscriminate reception by every person present is easiest precisely where the lowest ideas of the Eucharist prevail. There seems but little cause to shrink abased before some bread and wine; the mere reminders of the latest meal that Christ partook before He died. But in the ages that produced this Liturgy, the loftiest conception of the Eucharistic presence prevailed. The primitive faith in the awful sanctity of that Body and that Blood gave a tremendous meaning to the reminder that Holy Things are for holy persons. Thus if the Liturgy ordered that none should depart while the Oblation was offered, the only rightful course was to leave every man's conscience free to decide about reception.

CHAPTER V

THE PENITENTIAL SYSTEM

NON-COMMUNICATING attendance receives its first clear recognition in the penitential system of the Primitive Church. It is difficult to say at what date this penitential system became completed, but about the year 250 the Goths invaded Asia, and, in the social disorder which ensued, many Christians were guilty of acts of violence and dishonesty. Accordingly, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Bishop of Neo-Cæsarea, drew up some regulations for the treatment of such offenders: and these regulations were circulated among the Bishops of Asia. Among the various penalties here inflicted we read that Christians who had plundered their brethren were to be excommunicated; that those who unlawfully retained such plunder, as compensation for their own losses, were to be excluded from prayer; that those who acted as guides or informers to the Barbarians should not be permitted to be Hearers until their case had been investigated, but that if they voluntarily confessed their ill-doing and made restitution they might be admitted as Prostrators; that a similar sentence was to be imposed on those convicted of misappropriation, but

that these also if they voluntarily confessed might be allowed to communicate in prayer.

All these sentences refer to various stages in the primitive penitential system. The well-known division of penitents was into four classes, known respectively as the Mourners, the Hearers, the Prostrators, and the Costanders.

In an explanatory note, doubtless of ancient date, added to these Canons of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, we are told that:

"The station of Mourners is without the gate of the Oratory. The station of the Hearers is within the Oratory, in the Porch with the Catechumens. The station of Prostrators is within the door of the Temple. The station of Costanders is among the Communicants. The last is the participation of Holy Mysteries."[1]

The meaning of this passage is that outside the church, farthest from the altar, was placed the lowest order of penitents, the Mourners (*Flentes*).[2] Within the church came next the second class of the penitents, the Hearers (*Audientes*), permitted to be with the catechumens within hearing of the Scriptures and of the teaching, but obliged to withdraw before the prayers began. Yet nearer towards the altar was the third class placed, the Prostrate (*Substrati*), permitted to remain and kneel during the first portion of the prayers and then dismissed. Finally, near the altar, the

[1] Canons of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, *c.* 240 A.D. (Eastern Church), Johnson's "Vade Mecum," ii. 198.

[2] Bingham, vol. vi. p. 445 ff.

Costanders (*Consistentes*), permitted to remain with the faithful during the Eucharist, but not permitted to receive.

Reference is made to this non-communicating presence in the Canons of the Council of Nicæa. Canon xi. says:

"As many therefore as shall truly repent, shall continue three years amongst the hearers, as believers, and seven among the kneelers, and for two years they shall communicate with the people in prayer without the Offering."

The meaning of these last words has been disputed. Waterland, for example, wrote:

"I know it has been thought by persons of good learning that the fourth Order of penitents . . . were allowed to be present during the whole solemnity, while prohibited from receiving, and that Sunday after Sunday, for several years together."

This interpretation he considered mistaken, because he thought it contradicted a famous sermon of St. John Chrysostom, which will be discussed at a later time. Meanwhile, this difficulty is simply created by a particular view of St. Chrysostom's meaning: a view which we believe to be quite erroneous. Waterland continues:

"These Costanders were allowed to communicate in prayers with the faithful. What prayers? is the question. I suppose the prayers previous . . . to the Oblation." "The Costanders, being the highest order of penitents, had the

privilege to stand in the same place of the church with the faithful, and to abide there, after the catechumens and lower penitents were dismissed; and they were permitted to communicate in prayer, till the Oblation began, and then they also were to withdraw. This I collect, as from several other circumstances, so particularly from hence, that the deacons just before the salutation of peace, warned all non-communicants to withdraw. The Costanders must, of course, have been reckoned of that number, being forbid to communicate; and, therefore, they must have been obliged to withdraw after the preparatory prayers, and before the Communion, properly speaking, began."

But a large number of authorities reject Waterland's interpretation.

Bingham, for example, says that the Costanders were "so called from their having liberty (after the other penitents . . . and catechumens were dismissed) to stand with the Faithful at the Altar, and join in the common prayer, and see the Oblation offered." [1] They were "allowed . . . to be present whilst the faithful offered and communicated," says another, "though they might not themselves make their offerings nor partake of the Holy Communion." [2] They were, says a third, "directed to stand by the faithful whilst they communicated, without being allowed to join with them." [3] A fourth writer, an eminent liturgical student, Maskell, held the same opinion: "No one was present except

[1] "Origines Ecclesiasticæ," book xviii. ch. i. 3-6; vol. vi. p. 450.

[2] Hammond on the Canons, p. 31.

[3] Marshall, "Penitential Discipline of the Primitive Church," p. 84.

communicants and the last class of penitents."[1] A fifth learned writer, J. Johnson, held exactly the same view:

"The Penitent, when the term of his humiliation was now expiring, was permitted to stay out the whole Communion Service, and therefore to be present at the prayers, though not to partake of the Eucharist."[2]

Scudamore, the strongest opponent of non-communicating attendance, recognized the fact that the highest class of penitents was permitted to remain without receiving; but he offered an explanation of this permission which is, we believe, unique. He acknowledged that "this communion in prayers is generally thought to imply these persons as non-communicants during the celebration." But if "their supposed presence" is "pleaded as an early witness to the principle of offering without partaking," Scudamore answered, "we might reply that it was the very gravamen of their penance to behold others in the enjoyment of a blessing of which they were unworthy, as in an earlier stage, it was their punishment to remain at the church door while others entered."[3]

But it is obvious that as the penitent rose from class to class the severity of the Church decreased. After total exclusion from presence at the Eucharist it could only be with a sense of privilege that the penitent remained to share the Eucharistic prayers. That

[1] Maskell, "Ancient Liturgy," ch. v. p. lxxix. ed. 1846.
[2] J. Johnson, "Unbloody Sacrifice," ii. 240.
[3] "Communion of the Laity," 1855, p. 34.

this interpretation is correct is shown by an ancient Decree known as a Decretal of Pope Siricius, 385 A.D. The ascription may be erroneous, but its antiquity is not denied. The Decretal is that penitents who had fallen away and then repented might be permitted only to join in prayer with the faithful in church at the celebration of the sacred mysteries, *although they do not deserve it;* but they are to be forbidden to receive at the Lord's Table.[1]

This Canon is decisive that non-communicating attendance was considered in the light of an undeserved privilege accorded to the highest class of penitents.

Thus, while reception of the sacred mysteries was held as the ultimate purpose of the Eucharist, yet presence during the Oblation was regarded as, in itself, a blessing. Gradually the severity of the Church was taken off. It was better to be a door-keeper in the House of God than to dwell in the palaces of ungodliness. It was better still to be a hearer of the words of life within the sacred precincts. It was better yet to come near, and to see the offering of the Oblation, and to feel one's self a sharer in the great act of intercession. This was an immense lightening of the load of penance. Finally, the last barrier was done away, and the repentant and forgiven soul thus trained by long and gradual

[1] *Pope Siricius, c.* A.D. 385.

"Diximus decernendum, ut sola intra Ecclesiam fidelibus oratione jungantur; *Sacris mysteriorum celebritatibus,* QUAMVIS NON MEREANTUR, *intersint; a Dominicæ autem mensæ convivio segregentur.*"

"Decretal of Siricius." See Dionys. Exig., Migne, p. 234.

waiting was admitted to the actual reception of its Lord.

It is difficult to see how any one contemplating this penitential system of the early Church can regard the gradual removal of penalties as tantalizing the penitent with the spectacle of a privilege he might not share. Surely to be a hearer and a worshipper was a blessing, not a penalty.

This regulated attendance at the Eucharist, without reception, became a common feature of primitive congregations. The Synod of Ancyra, held in 314, is full of similar penitential regulations.

Phrases such as "let them communicate only in prayer," "let them communicate without the Oblation," are very familiar. Laity who had, under constraint, shared in a pagan festival were to be one year among the hearers, three among the supplicants, two years to communicate only in prayer, and then advance to perfection. This abstinence from Communion for two years while present at the Sacrifice is a very common period assigned. Sometimes non-communicating attendance is extended over a period of five years. In one instance apparently until the hour of death.[1]

A well-known instance will be found in the important letter of St. Basil, in the year 375 : a very graphic description is given of the stages through which the penitent had to pass, after certain grievous sins, before

[1] Hefele, i. 200 ; *cf.* Ancyra, *c.* 24–25. *Ib. c.* 24. *Ib.* 28. *Ib. c.* 36.

he could be restored to the privilege of Eucharistic reception.[1] The offender was to be excommunicate

"until he depart from his unlawful and unhallowed deed. But after that he arrive at the knowledge of that fearful sin, let him lament for three years, standing at the door of the house of prayer, and beseeching the people that enter in for prayer, so that each in sympathy with him may make strenuous supplications unto the Lord. And after this, for another three years let him be admitted as a hearer only, and having heard the Scriptures and the teaching let him be cast forth, and be not found worthy of prayer. Then, if he shall have sought it with tears, and have fallen down before the Lord with a contrite heart, and with great humility, let him be allowed among the prostrate, for another three years. And thus, when he shall have shewn worthy fruits of repentance, in the tenth year let him be received into the prayer of the faithful, apart from the Oblation. And when he hath joined with the faithful in prayer for two years, then at last let him be thought worthy of participation in the good Gift."

As directed by the Council of Nicæa, the Church was to keep constant watch over her penitents. If those in the final class were in danger of death, they were at once admitted to the privilege of communicating. But if they recovered, they were still restricted to the communion of prayer.[2] The Canon of Nicæa regulated a practice which had already existed for at least some eighty years. It also directed the practice for some time to come. Thus, the faithful must have

[1] Ep. ccxvii., Gaume, iii. II. 469 ff. 476.
[2] Nicæa, c. 13.

become familiarized with the presence of non-communicants, for the penitent remained among the bystanders for several years. Waterland says, "nothing was more common." And in this case we have the action of the Universal Church: no merely local Synod. Clearly the Council of Nicæa could not have permitted the presence of non-communicating penitents at the Eucharist if the Primitive Church regarded such presence as antagonistic to the purest principles of the Faith.

The penitential system of the Early Church is spoken of approvingly in our Commination Service. The practice that "at the beginning of Lent such persons as stood convicted of notorious sin were put to open penance," is called a godly discipline, and its restoration much to be wished. If the discipline of the Primitive Church were restored among us, there would be in the Anglican Church persons privileged to join in the Sacrifice while forbidden to communicate.

CHAPTER VI

THE EARLY CANONS

NEXT to the penitential discipline of the Early Church must be placed the Canons regulating the observance of the Eucharist.

The Council of Antioch in 341 enacted the following Canon:

"All who enter into the Church of God and hear the sacred Scriptures but do not communicate in prayer with the people, or turn away from the participation of the Eucharist through some disorderliness, these are to be cast out of the Church."[1]

To this Canon of Antioch should be added other regulations found in the collection called the "Apostolical Canons." The date of this collection has been greatly disputed; but modern criticism appears to agree in assigning most of them to the period between 300 and 400 A.D. Canons viii. and ix. deal with the subject of Non-Communicating Attendance.

The 8th regulates the practice of the clergy:

"If any one, bishop, priest or deacon, or on the roll of the clergy, shall not have communicated when the Oblation

[1] Hefele, "History of the Councils."

was made, let him explain the reason, and if it is commendable, let him be excused. But if he do not explain, let him be suspended from Communion, as one who becomes a cause of mischief to the people, and who has raised suspicion against him who offered, as not having offered in the lawful way."

Canon ix. regulates the practice of the laity:

"All the faithful who enter and hear the Scriptures, but do not remain for the prayer and the Holy Communion, ought to be suspended as causing disorderliness in the Church."

The Greek Canonist, Theodore Balsamon, who died in 1200 A.D., writes that some understand the viiith Apostolical Canon to mean that every ordained person who does not communicate is to be suspended, even if he stand outside the sanctuary; an interpretation which Balsamon himself criticizes as "most oppressive." His own opinion is not free from difficulties, but appears to be expressed in the following terms:

"We say that they indeed who are numbered on the roll of the hierarchy and minister at the mysteries of the hallowed things, and do not communicate when the Oblation is made, shall be suspended unless they give a reasonable cause. But the consecrated men who do not handle the Holy Things on the Altar, and all the faithful laity who do not abide and persevere to the end until the Holy Communion is made by those who are worthy, shall be suspended as disorderly. For to say that we are bound, all the faithful laity and the clergy who do not handle the Holy Things, daily to communicate in the mysteries or else to be suspended, is neither according to the instruction

of the Canon, nor possible to be done. For this reason the 9th Canon said that the faithful who do not remain are to be punished, and did not add those who do not communicate. Thus interpret the Canons according to the 2nd Canon of the Synod of Antioch."

Accordingly, when he came to this Canon of Antioch, Balsamon refers his readers back to the previous exposition, and continues:

"In accordance therewith understand the present Canon also, and say that these will not be reckoned to turn away from the Holy Communion who abominate it, nor, as certain have said, they who avoid it from piety and lowliness of mind (for the former will not be suspended only but also be denounced as heretics; but the latter will be held worthy of pardon for their piety and worthy reverence for holy things), but those, whoever they are, who from contempt and arrogance go out of the church disorderly before the Holy Communion, and have not patience to behold the Divine partaking of the Holy Mysteries."[1]

There are difficulties elsewhere in Balsamon's expositions; because it is not always clear, when he is quoting other opinions, whether he endorses them or not; but the general tenor of his exposition is unmistakable. He was, of course, writing at a period when non-communicating attendance had become the ordinary practice, and this fact probably influenced his exposition; but he holds that the ancient Canons

[1] *Cf.* "Syntagma tōn theiōn kai hierōn Kanonōn." Ed. Pallé and Potlé, tom. 3; Athens, 1853.

are capable of an interpretation which harmonizes with the ecclesiastical practice of his own day. At the same time, he admits that other interpretations were given, but considers them both most oppressive, or contrary to the intention of the Canon, or impossible to be observed. A very careful exponent of this Canonist draws the following conclusions:

"Balsamon's judgment seems to be this, that by these Canons the clergy who do not handle the mysteries at the Altar, and the faithful laity who are present, are not compelled to communicate on every occasion on pain of suspension, and that reverential shrinking from Communion on any given occasion is a legitimate ground of excuse. But he decides that if they wait till the beginning of the Liturgy they must necessarily abide to the end."[1]

A second Greek Canonist, Zonaras, however, says that

"the present Canon" ("Apostolical Constitutions," ix.) "requires of all when the Holy Sacrifice is being celebrated, to persevere to the end in the prayer and the Holy Communion. For the laity also were then required to communicate *as a continual habit.*"[2]

On the Canon of Antioch, he observes that the withdrawal forbidden was not such as was due to hatred or repugnance for the Holy Mysteries. "For," he says, "if they turned away from it as hating and loathing the Holy Communion, they would be

[1] "The Canonists on Non-communicating Attendance," *Union Review*, 1873, p. 278.

[2] συνεχῶς, frequenter.

condemned not to suspension, but to absolute denunciation and anathema."

The value of this exposition depends on the words underlined. The Greek word here translated, "as a continual habit," may be also translated "invariably."

The question is whether Zonaras meant that the laity were required to communicate as a general rule, or without any exception whenever present. It seems that there is plentiful evidence for the use of the word to denote a regular and constant habit.[1] In which case Zonaras does not mean that the laity were required by this Canon to communicate invariably. As Zonaras then understood the Canon, the principles and practice of the Primitive Church were that

"all were desired to be ready and fit every day. They were forbidden to leave the church before the Holy Communion, because they were expected and desired to comply with the ordinary rule, unless there were good reason to the contrary. The general intention of the Church was that they should always receive when opportunity offered, and therefore she required their presence; yet they were not actually compelled to communicate if they were for the time in an exceptional position which prevented it, but there must be no disorderliness, but a reasonable cause."[2]

The Canon of Antioch evidently contemplates two classes of persons: first, those who "do not

[1] See "The Canonists on Non-communicating Attendance," *Union Review*, 1873, p. 279.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 288.

communicate in prayer with the people"; that is, those who are not present at the service; secondly, those who "turn away from the participation of the Eucharist through some disorderliness." In this second case, what is contemplated is clearly not all refusal to receive, but a refusal which is liable to be interpreted as prompted by some disorderliness. The Canon condemns those who do not communicate in the prayers as well as those who withdraw from reception in a disorderly way. A learned writer[1] suggests that the Canon was chiefly directed against a class of unorthodox persons "who held private conventicles, but came occasionally to church, to hear the Scripture read, and sermons preached, and then departed in a disorderly and scornful manner, upon some erroneous principles of their sect, to the great scandal and offence of the more serious and sober part of the congregation." With this view Waterland[2] was disposed to agree: "The Canon does not simply and absolutely censure all non-communicants, but some only, with this restriction as doing it with some disorderliness," or, as one translator renders it, "according to the principles of their own sect." "Now, if such was the case," adds Waterland, "then the rigour of the Canon affected not the main body of the faithful, adhering to the Church, who might be still left to the same discretional conscientious liberty as before."[3] Scudamore

[1] Schelstrate, "De Concil. Antiochen."
[2] Waterland, "Doctrine of the Eucharist," p. 376.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 377.

also admits, with regard to the Canon of Antioch, that

"it is probable, too, that the offence of which the Fathers of Antioch complain *did not consist in simply turning away from the Sacrament. Perhaps* they do not mean that such a proceeding was in itself disorderly, but that those whom they censure did it in a disorderly manner as if in contempt of the Church. . . ."[1]

Apostolical Canon viii. affecting the practice of the clergy obviously considers that reception is their ordinary practice. It recognizes, however, that just reasons for presence without reception on their part may exist. But it requires those reasons to be stated. It does not say to whom. The ground for this regulation being that refusal to communicate on the part of the clergy present would be interpreted as challenging the validity of the consecration, being a slur upon the celebrant. All this evidently points to local and exceptional conditions. The explanation given by Waterland is certainly the best we possess. He refers to another ancient rule that "if any one takes exception to a married Presbyter, as such, thinking it not lawful to receive the Communion at his hands, let him be anathema." Some local problem or other may lurk behind the other rule also. In any case, the Canon clearly contemplates the presence of non-communicating clergy in certain cases, on adequate grounds. It does not suggest that if he

[1] Scudamore, "Communion of the Laity," p. 52. The italics are ours.

be unable to communicate he must depart from the service. Moreover, it leaves entirely undefined what reasons would justify non-reception. This vagueness can scarcely be unintentional.

Apostolical Canon ix. is closely connected in principle with this Canon of Antioch. Indeed, according to a recent critic,[1] it is derived from it. It condemns those who do not remain in church for the Eucharistic prayers and the Communion.

The phrase in Apostolical Canon ix., "do not stay during prayers and the Holy Communion," seems equivalent to "in any irregular manner dishonour the common reception of the Holy Communion," in the Canon of Antioch.[2] Waterland explains the latter to mean "turning their backs on the reception of the Holy Eucharist after a disorderly manner." And this is confirmed by the rendering given of a Spanish Canonist of the ninth century: "pro luxuria sua avertat se a communione Sacramenti."[3]

Plainly none of these phrases can refer to the frequent communicant who, out of devotion, seeks yet further opportunities for offering the Oblation when, for adequate reasons, he is not prepared to receive.

Comparing together the two Apostolical Canons we notice a remarkable difference of wording between that which refers to the clergy and that referring to the laity. The Canon referring to the clergy says: if he do not communicate; that referring to the laity

[1] Dreys. in Hefele, "Appendix," t. i. p. 613. [2] *Ibid.* p. 375.
[3] Martin Bracarensis, in Bingham, vol. v. 151.

says: if they do not stay during prayers and the Holy Communion. The former deals with actual reception; the latter with presence in church. Tho two expressions are evidently carefully chosen, and deal with different things. Where they meant actual reception they said so. The object of the Canon is, then, to insist on the presence of the laity at the Eucharist, but not to compel reception. Moreover, since the clergy were allowed in certain cases to remain without Communion, it is clear that the rule for the laity could not be more stringent.

The meaning of these regulations has been the subject of much dispute, but it would be difficult to improve on the wisdom of Waterland's remark that:

"It is hard to judge certainly of the particular drift or purport of such Canons, without a more explicit knowledge of the then present circumstances; but it is not likely that they were ever intended to oblige all the faithful to communicate as often as they came to Divine Service, or to abridge them of the reasonable liberty of judging how far they were prepared for it, and whether they might not sometimes (provided it were not customary, so as to amount to contempt) abstain from it." [1]

The monk, Dionysius Exiguus, an Oriental by birth, who presided over a monastery in Rome, and died in 556, made a translation of the ancient Greek Canons into Latin. He grouped one series as Canons of the Universal Church, and a second series as Canons of the Church of Rome. In the latter of these he placed

[1] Waterland, "Doctrine of the Eucharist," ch. xiv. p. 378

the Apostolical Canons. As we have seen, the 9th Canon, which regulates the practice of the laity at the Eucharist, reads in the Greek "all the faithful who enter and hear the Scriptures, but do not remain for the prayers and the Holy Communion, ought to be suspended as causing disorderliness in the Church." Dionysius, in place of "do not remain for the prayers and the Holy Communion," translated it, "do not remain for the prayers nor receive the Holy Communion." This rendering is not really a translation. It is a paraphrase which introduces a great difficulty. For it rules that the laity are not only to remain for the Eucharist but also to receive. And this rule is quite unqualified by any exception; whereas the previous rule for the clergy recognized that exceptional cases were permissible. Now, it is not in the least likely that the rule imposed upon the laity was more strict than that for the clergy. Hence it seems highly probable that the interpretation put upon it by Dionysius is a mistake.

The general interpretation of the Canons on Eucharistic attendance which is given in these present pages may be supported by reference to various authorities.

The Protestant writer Gerhard Voss (died 1649) is quoted by Perrone as maintaining that "the ancient Canons do not require that every one should communicate as often as he is present, but that no one should depart until the Communion is completed." [1]

[1] Perrone, "Prælect. Theol.: De Sacramentis, De Eucharistia," p. 99. I have not been able to verify this reference.

The liturgiologist Renaudot cautions his readers to remember that

"when the ancient Liturgies bid the non-communicants to depart, they do not contemplate those persons who are not intending to communicate on that particular day, but those who have no right to communicate at all, such as hearers and catechumens, or those who have lost their right, such as penitents."[1]

But whatever the exact intention of these Canons may have been, what is certain is that no method of exclusion was carried into effect. They were embodied in the collections of Canons which had authority in the East. They were translated into Latin and circulated in the West. But their directions did not prevent the prevalence of non-communicating attendance. They became antiquated and obsolete. They remained in the record of ancient statutes, but they failed entirely to regulate and control the practice of Christendom.

In the Penitential of Archbishop Theodore (668–690) the Archbishop says that in the Greek Church both clergy and laity communicated every Lord's Day, and that he who did not communicate for three Lord's Days was excommunicated, according to the Canons. But he adds that a different custom prevailed in the West. The Romans communicate those who desire it, but do not excommunicate those who are unwilling to receive.[2]

[1] Renaudotius, "Liturgia Æthiopica," Observ. 2, quoted in Perrone, "De Eucharistia," p. 199.

[2] *Cf.* Haddan and Stubbs, iii. 186.

There is another element to be taken into consideration. A rule was imposed by the Spanish Council of Elvira in 305, which attached a penalty to any one who, living in a city, was absent from church on three Sundays consecutively.[1] Here, then, an attempt was made to enforce attendance at the Eucharist. Upon this regulation Scudamore strangely remarks:

"As that only inflicted suspension when the offence was repeated on three successive Sundays, there could have been no practical hardship in their being required to communicate whenever present even then."[2]

No practical hardship! This is a view of the privilege of Communion which is difficult to characterize. Not only is the very thought of coercion abhorrent in relation to Eucharistic reception, but such a view simply takes humanity in the block, and ignores all questions of preparedness. But many cases would certainly exist where to insist upon frequent Communion would be most dangerous. Such a decree must have led either to unworthy reception or to non-communicating attendance. And the more rigidly this ruling was enforced upon the ordinary Christian, the more certainly must non-communicating attendance have been sanctioned by the Church as the necessary escape from profane reception. Nay, the very existence of such a rule implies that non-communicating attendance was contemplated in the minds of those who originated it. For what synod in Christendom would

[1] Hefele, "Concilien-Geschichte," i. 136, Canon 21.
[2] Scudamore, "Communion of the Laity," p. 53.

have enforced something like fortnightly Communion on a whole section of the Christian population indiscriminately, without any loophole for avoidance of unworthy reception?

However, from the year 500 A.D. we find ecclesiastical legislation definitely authorizing the practice of non-communicating presence. At the Synod of Agatha,[1] in France, in the year 506, it was ruled that, upon every Sunday, lay-people were to assist during the whole of Mass; that is to say, they were not to go out before the Bishop's blessing. If they did, they were to be publicly reproved by the Bishop.[2]

The same synod also defined the minimum of reception for lay-people. "Lay-people who do not communicate on the Birthday of the Lord, on Easter and Whitsuntide, are not to be regarded as Catholics nor numbered among them."[3] This is probably the earliest order directing Communion of the laity three times in the year. It points to the fact that reception had enormously decreased.

These Canons of the Synod of Agatha were signed by nearly seventy Bishops. They were passed under the presidency of St. Cæsarius, Bishop of Arles, himself a well-known advocate of the practice of non-communicating, a subject which he made the theme of some very striking sermons. These Canons of Agatha show distinctly that in those days the faithful were not only not compelled to communicate whenever they

[1] Hefele, "Concilien-Geschichte," ii. 639.
[2] Canon 47. [3] Canon 18.

were present, but that frequent presence was advocated while a minimum of reception was prescribed.[1]

A closely similar rule was adopted at the Synod of Orleans in 511,[2] where it was laid down that "the laity must not leave the church before the end of the Mass. And if a Bishop is present, they ought to receive the Benediction from him before they depart."[3]

These are the earliest examples of a type of legislation which became very prevalent. They suggest the question, Did these Councils of the Church in France know of the decisions of the Council of Antioch, some hundred and fifty years before? If not, then we see to what a limited extent the code of the Eastern Church influenced the development of the West. Or if they did know, then we see what interpretation was placed by a later Council upon the decisions of an earlier, and how far its members thought themselves bound by its authority. Very probably the Church in France did not know of the earlier decisions; for they were not translated into Latin before the year 500, when a Latin version of them appeared at Rome. In any case, it is evident that the Church in France saw nothing in Eucharistic principles to prohibit the practice of offering without receiving.

[1] *Cf.* Bail. Summa Concil., ii. 173. [2] Hefele, ii. 646.
[3] Canon 26.

CHAPTER VII

THE PRACTICE OF THE ANCIENT CHURCHES

CONSIDERABLE light is thrown upon the subject by the practice of separate Churches. This may be illustrated from the Church in Rome, the Church in Milan, the Church in Africa, the Church in Alexandria, the Church in Antioch, the Church in Constantinople, and the Church in France.

1. So far as the present writer is aware, there are no early evidences of the practice in Rome.

St. Jerome, writing in the year 394, says, "I know that at Rome it is customary for the faithful always to receive the Body of Christ, a custom which I neither censure nor endorse. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."[1] St. Jerome, then, while recognizing that the custom prevalent at Rome was for the whole congregation to receive, adopts a very independent attitude towards that custom, and evidently considers it a local arrangement rather than necessitated by Christian principle. He would prefer to leave reception to the conscience of the individual. He also in the same passage insists that reception depends on

[1] Ep. xlviii. 15, "Ad Pammachium."

fitness, and that many reasons may exist why an individual cannot advisedly receive while nevertheless he can pray. "Which is the more important, to pray or to receive Christ's Body? Surely to receive Christ's Body?" And he argues that if certain moral conditions hinder the less, they will much more hinder the greater. The same principle involves that fitness for the less does not necessarily imply fitness for the greater. In any case, according to Jerome's idea, fitness to receive is what the individual must decide for himself. In point of fact, Jerome's teaching adhered throughout to the line of individual decision. To a correspondent who asked him whether one ought to "receive the Eucharist daily according to the custom, as currently reported, of the Churches of Rome and Spain," Jerome replied:

> "The best advice that I can give you is this: Church traditions, especially when they do not run counter to the faith, are to be observed in the form in which previous generations have handed them down; and the use of one Church is not to be annulled because it is contrary to that of another."[1]

The Latin version of the "Apostolical Canons," by Dionysius Exiguus, about 500, looks as if the same custom still prevailed at Rome. For it is hardly likely that he would have substituted in his translation the sentence condemning those "who do not remain for the prayers, nor receive the Holy Communion," in place of the sentence of the original, "do

[1] St. Jerome, Ep. lxxi. 6.

not remain for the prayers and the Holy Communion," or that he would have entitled his collection "Canons of the Roman Church," unless this represented the Roman practice.

However, by the time of Theodore, the second Archbishop of Canterbury, the Roman custom was relaxed. For the Archbishop, who had himself lived in Rome, and was familiar with the practice both of East and West, says:

"The Greeks communicate every Sunday, both clergy and laity; and those who do not communicate for three Sundays are excommunicated, as the Canons have it. So, too, the Romans communicate, if they please; but those who do not choose to do so are not excommunicated." [1]

2. Next to the Church in Rome may be placed the Church in Milan.

St. Ambrose, in his treatise concerning the Mysteries, dwells almost entirely on the aspect of Eucharistic reception.[2] At the same time, he applies to the Eucharist the Psalmist's aspiration, "I will go unto the altar of God." [3] For St. Ambrose the central action of the Eucharist is the Consecration; [4] and the Consecration is, in his view, effected by our Lord's own words of institution. With these Sacraments Christ feeds His Church.[5]

[1] Theodore, "Penitential," xii. 1, 2.
[2] Ambrosius, "De Mysteriis," cap. viii. 40.
[3] Ps. xlii. 4.
[4] Cap. ix. 52.
[5] *Ibid.* 55.

In his treatise on Penitence, St. Ambrose notices that two classes of penitents existed in the Church of his day: penitents who desired immediate restoration to full Communion in the Eucharist, and penitents whom a sense of unworthiness restrained. There was an excessive eagerness on the one side, and an excessive caution on the other. The former put the priest in a difficulty, for he was expressly warned in Scripture not to "cast pearls before swine"; the latter put themselves in a difficulty, for by their over-severe self-judgment they deprived themselves of the grace which was the remedy for their faults.[1] Thus Ambrose sees a class which ought to be restrained from reception, and a class which ought to be encouraged to receive. It is clear from all this that, quite apart from any canonical regulations, individual Christians were determining for themselves at Milan when they would receive and when they would refrain.

In the treatise on the Sacraments, which, although later than Ambrose's day, must at least be called Ambrosian, since it is founded entirely upon the treatise on the Mysteries, although it bears the obvious proofs of later developments, we find among liturgical quotations that the priest said:

"Therefore, being mindful of His most glorious Passion and Resurrection from Hades and ascension into Heaven, we offer to Thee this immaculate Victim, . . . this sacred Bread and Cup of eternal life: and we pray and implore

[1] Ambrosius, "De Pœnitentia," II. ix. 87-89.

that Thou wilt take up this oblation by the hands of Thy Angels to Thy heavenly Altar. . . ."[1]

Then, commenting on the words, "As often as we receive we announce the Lord's death," the writer says:

"If we announce the Death, we announce the forgiveness of sins. If as often as this Blood is poured forth it is poured for remission of sins, I ought to receive it always, that my sins may be always forgiven. I who always sin ought always to receive the medicine for sin."[2]

Frequent reception of the Eucharist is based in this Ambrosian treatise on the Lord's Prayer.[3] But he immediately adds:

"If it is daily bread, why do you receive it once a year as the Greeks in the East are accustomed to do? Receive daily that which daily can profit you. So live that you may deserve to receive every day. He who does not deserve to receive daily does not deserve to receive once a year. Did not Job offer a daily sacrifice for his sons, in case they had sinned either in thought or speech? And you hear that as often as the Sacrifice is offered, the Lord's Death, the Lord's Resurrection, the Lord's exaltation are declared, and the forgiveness of sins. This Bread of life, then, do you not receive daily? He who is wounded requires to be healed. We are wounded, for we are under sin. The healing is that heavenly and adorable Sacrament."[4]

The language of Pseudo-Ambrose is popular rather

[1] Pseudo-Ambrose, "De Sacramentis," IV. vi. 27.
[2] *Ibid.* IV. vi. 28.
[3] *Ibid.* V. iv. 24, 25.
[4] *Ibid.* V. v. 25.

than exact. It implies much more than he affirms. He drew an ideal of daily reception, but acknowledges the yearly reception as a commonly existing fact; tolerated at least, if not approved. He also speaks of the sacrifice offered by Job, which was offered for the absent, as the Scripture passage shows. This illustration would therefore imply that the Eucharistic Offering benefited those who were not there. But the author does not draw this inference.

It is very obvious from these words that if daily reception was the custom with some, reception once a year was the custom with others. It is also clear that the writer is addressing believers who might receive daily if they pleased. They were not penitents excluded from reception by the Church's discipline, but self-excluded believers. And it is clear also that these non-communicants were present at these Eucharistic instructions. It is clearly impossible that they were absent from the Eucharist for a whole year, except only on the solitary occasion when they communicated. Thus the passage really witnesses to the growth of non-communicating attendance at Milan.

It should be added that the author of this treatise concerning the Sacraments exhibits a curious mixture of independence and respect towards the practices of the Roman Church. There was customary in his Church a ceremonial washing the feet of the newly baptized. He is aware that this custom does not prevail in the Roman Church, "whose idea and practice we follow in all things."

"I say this," adds the writer, "not to criticize others, but to maintain my own functions. In all things I desire to follow the Roman Church: nevertheless, we also have understanding; therefore we more rightly maintain what is more rightly observed elsewhere."[1]

3. The practice of the Church in Africa may be illustrated from an answer given by Tertullian (200 A.D.) when consulted on the proper course to be taken in the following circumstances. There was a daily celebration of the Eucharist in the Church at Carthage, which was evidently habitually attended by the faithful. A difficulty, however, arose, when the Church appointed a day to be observed as a fast. To fast was to abstain from food altogether; and such fasting must, they held, include the Eucharist itself. To communicate would be to break the Church's fast. What, then, was a Christian's duty? The solution given by the majority of local believers was that they ought not to be present unless they received. "Most think that they must not be present at the sacrificial prayers": that is, present without communicating. This is interesting, because it shows that in Africa, about 200 A.D., communion of all qualified persons was the general rule. The solution of the difficulty by non-communicating attendance had not occurred to the majority of the faithful. They were accordingly prepared to absent themselves from the service.

With this solution Tertullian, however, was by no means satisfied. "Will not," he asks, "your fast be

[1] "De Sacramentis," III. i. 5.

more solemn, if you have also stood at God's Altar?"

Accordingly, he recommends them to take the Eucharist into their hands, and to reserve it for future reception at home when the fast was ended. Tertullian then recommended non-communicating attendance. He contemplated with equanimity the sight of a number of persons "present at the sacrificial prayers" without communicating at that particular time. He could hardly have recommended this individual reservation, which would apparently affect the entire assembly of worshippers, had there existed in Christendom a universal rule compelling all persons to communicate whenever present; or if abstinence from reception was regarded as unevangelical.

Tertullian's answer belongs to a state of discipline which has altogether passed away, and it is a solution which neither the advocates nor the opponents of the practice of non-communicating attendance would desire to enjoin in modern life. But it is of importance as an early attempt to solve the difficulty felt by Christians in being present, when reluctant, for some reason, to receive.

It is natural to expect a reference to non-communicating attendance in the voluminous writings of St. Augustine. No such reference, however, appears to exist. But the general principles laid down in his celebrated letter to Januarius may be safely said to indicate the line he would have adopted.[1] He recognizes

[1] Ep. liv.

great variety of local customs within the sphere of things permissible, and recommends the individual to conform, as far as may be, to the custom of the local Church where he may happen temporarily to reside. He quotes the famous maxim of St. Ambrose, to do when at Rome what Rome does, and points out that Ambrose accordingly followed one observance in Rome and another in Milan. He says that

"in some places people receive the Lord's Body and Blood every day, in other places only on special days; in some places no day elapsed without the offering of the Eucharist, in other places it was offered only on the Sabbath and on the Lord's Day; in other places, again, on the Lord's Day only."[1]

These variations would obviously affect the practice of non-communicating presence, which would more naturally occur where the Eucharist was offered every day. But no definite evidence exists to show the sequel to the advice given as far back as 200 by Tertullian.

4. The practice in the Church at Alexandria may be given in the words of St. Clement:

"Some in the dispensation of the Eucharist, according to custom, enjoin that each one of the people individually should take his part. One's own conscience is best for choosing accurately or shunning."[2]

That is, that at Alexandria in the time of St.

[1] Ep. 2.
[2] St. Clement, "Miscellanies," Bk. I. p. 351.

Clement, *c.* 200 A.D., reception of the Eucharist was left to the conscience of each individual present. This is exceedingly important, because the position of the Church at Alexandria, as one of the five principal Churches in Christendom, makes its practices authoritative and representative of subordinate Churches.

Scudamore, while understanding the Apostolical Canon to forbid non-communicating attendance, thought that it was never enforced at Alexandria.[1]

Upon St. Clement of Alexandra, Waterland remarked:

"From thence we may observe, that there was yet no standing rule or canon of the Church obliging all the faithful to receive as often as they met for Divine Service; but Christians were left at liberty to judge how far they were fitly qualified in knowledge or in godly living; only it was supposed that they ought to be fitly qualified; and if they were, to receive."[2]

There is a later record, apparently of the practice at Alexandria, in a sermon of uncertain date, sometimes printed as belonging to the seventh century, and commonly ascribed to Eusebius of Alexandria. Eusebius was a Bishop, but of what diocese is no longer known.

The devotional guidance of Eusebius as to the Eucharist took the following lines:

"In the morning, therefore, resort to the Church of God, approach our Lord, confess to Him your sins, repent

[1] Scudamore, "Communion of the Laity," p. 71, *n.*
[2] Waterland, "Doctrine of the Eucharist," ch. xiv. p. 373.

them with prayer and contrite heart; remain during the Divine and sacred Liturgy; complete your prayer, and by no means depart before the assembly is dismissed. Behold your Lord distributed in portions, and yet unconsumed. If conscious that your mind is pure, draw near to the reception of the Lord's Body and Blood. But if your conscience condemn you for unadvised and evil deeds, refrain from reception, until you have healed your conscience by penitence, but assist at the prayer, and do not depart from the Church until dismissed." [1]

It should be added that the same Eusebius had a very clear conception that the Eucharist was an Offering.

5. Next in order we proceed to the Church in Antioch. And this brings us at once to the famous language of St. Chrysostom.[2]

"What a custom! What presumption! In vain is the sacrifice made every day; in vain do we stand at the altar! There is none to partake. I say this, not that you should partake rashly, but that you should make yourselves worthy. Are you unworthy of the Sacrifice, and unfit to partake of it? Neither then are you worthy of the prayers. You hear the herald standing and proclaiming, 'All ye that are penitents, withdraw.' All those who do not partake are penitents. If you are one of the penitents, you ought not to partake, for he that does not partake is one of the penitents. Why, then, does he say, 'Ye who cannot pray, withdraw,' and you impudently stay? But, I suppose, you are not one of those, but one who is able to partake, and you do not reflect? you do not weigh the

[1] "Sermons of Eusebius of Alexandria," Migne, "P. G.," t. 86, pt. i., Sermon xvi. § 2, p. 416.

[2] Chrysost. in "Ep. ad Ephes.," Hom. iii. 4, 5.

matter? Consider, I pray. The royal table is prepared, the angels minister round the table, the King Himself is present, and do you stand gaping? Your garments are defiled, and do you care not? But, you will say, they are clean. Then sit down, and partake. The King comes daily to see His guests, and converses with them all. And now in your consciences He says, 'Friends, why stand ye here, not having a wedding garment?' He did not say, 'Why have you sat down?' but before he sat down, He pronounces him unworthy so much as to come in. For He did not say, 'Why have you sat down?' but 'Why did you come in?' The same now He says to all of us that stand here impudently and shamelessly. For every one that does not partake of the mysteries, stands shameless and impudent. For this reason they that are in sin are first cast out. For just as, when the master is present at table, those slaves who have offended him must not be present, but are sent away, in the same manner here, when the sacrifice is performed, and Christ the Lamb of God is offered up, when you hear the words, 'Let us all pray together,' when you see the doors closed, think, then, that heaven is drawn down from above, and that the angels come down. As, therefore, none of the uninitiated ought to be present, so also none of those that are initiated, if they be defiled. Tell me, if one invited to a feast washes his hands and sits down, and is ready for the feast, and then partakes not of it, does he not insult him who invited him? Were it not better that such a man had not come at all? In such a manner you, too, have come. You sang the hymn, you professed in the face of all that you are worthy when you did not depart with the unworthy. Why did you stay, and yet do not partake of the table? One says, 'I am unworthy.' Then you are unworthy also of the communion in prayer."

This famous passage shows the existence at Antioch of a widely prevalent tendency among Church-people to practise non-communicating attendance. It also shows that St. Chrysostom rebuked the practice. But the significance of St. Chrysostom's rebuke, his real intention, clearly depends on the actual circumstances with which he had to deal. Was he really opposing the practice in every case? He seems to recognize an exception in the case of those under penitential discipline. But apart from that exception, he seems to require that every one present shall receive. To the plea that men desired to remain but felt unworthy to communicate, he replies that slaves who have offended their master must be sent away, and that those who are unworthy to communicate in the sacred Gift are unworthy to communicate in the prayers.

Now, the obvious difficulty which this answer presents is that Chrysostom could not have meant to assert that the act of prayer requires the same preparedness as the act of communicating. This is universally acknowledged. Nor can it be truly said that the prayers attached to the Eucharist are so exceptional as to demand a state of fitness equal to that which is essential for a communicant. To credit Chrysostom with this assertion would be to credit him with an exaggeration which would discount the value of his remarks. It would, therefore appear more probable that he was not contemplating the case of the devout and regular communicant who for certain reasons is present at times without reception, but the lax and careless

multitude who very rarely received, and upon whom he, therefore, desired to urge very strongly, in rhetorical and perhaps somewhat unmeasured terms, the duty of frequent Communion. That this passage as a whole is popular rather than scientific, rhetorical rather than exact, is admitted by those who would interpret it as prohibiting the practice altogether. Indeed, the opening sentences of the passage ("In vain there is a daily sacrifice. To no purpose do we stand at the altar. There is no one to communicate") would, if taken literally, prove too much. They would prove that St. Chrysostom himself continued to celebrate the Eucharist, either in the absence of a congregation, or in the presence of a congregation entirely composed of people practising non-communicating. Hence, Scudamore, one of the strongest opponents of non-communicating attendance, says that he is strongly persuaded that this passage is "no more than an example of the hyperbolical language so common with this Father."[1] This explanation seems very probably true. But if it is, the theological value of the sermon is decidedly diminished. We cannot feel so sure of the real bearing of language wanting in the rudiments of accuracy and precision. Certainly St. Chrysostom discouraged non-communicating attendance on the part of infrequent communicants, but it is not clear what course he proposed to take in case the congregation failed to comply with his directions. Would he continue to tolerate it? Or would he discontinue to celebrate the

[1] Scudamore, "Communion of the Laity," p. 88.

Eucharist? Can any one credit him with the latter intention?

There are several other considerations, apart from this particular passage, which must be taken into account if we would understand St. Chrysostom's real mind.

The first is that the sermon in question was in all probability [1] preached at Antioch somewhat after the year 386, the date of Chrysostom's ordination to the priesthood. Now, the Council of Antioch had already legislated on the subject in 341. And if the interpretation of the Canon of Antioch already given from Waterland be correct that, "it is not likely that it was ever intended to oblige all the faithful to communicate as often as they came to Divine Service," we have further light on the practice of that church in which St. Chrysostom preached.

Secondly, if non-communicating attendance was a privilege allowed to a certain class in the penitential discipline of the Church, then Chrysostom's language must be read in the light of that system which, certainly, the Bishop had no intention to contradict. He must then have admitted the principle of non-communicating attendance as allowable in certain cases. Doubtless, these cases were those officially determined by the Church; and there is a difference between authoritative permission to penitents and self-constituted practice. But yet the transition from one to the other must have been easy and quite

[1] So Tillemont and Montfaucon.

natural. Individuals not classified by the Church among public penitents may yet have felt themselves conscientiously unable to communicate, while yet desirous of sharing in the Eucharistic prayers. And if such persons, who may certainly have formed a considerable proportion of the Church-goers of the fourth century in Antioch, had taken the preacher at his word and absented themselves from the Eucharist altogether, they would only have solved one difficulty by creating another, and have given additional force to the preacher's complaint, "in vain is the daily sacrifice: there is no one to partake."

6. We turn to the Church in Constantinople.

At Constantinople, in the fourth century, Nectarius, the Bishop, abolished the office of priest in charge of the penitents,[1] "at the advice of certain persons who urged the necessity of leaving each individual to examine himself before participating in the Sacred Mysteries." Thus, adds Sozomen, the historian, disapprovingly, extreme laxity was substituted for the severity and rigour of antiquity. There is a special interest in this, for Chrysostom succeeded Nectarius at Constantinople in 398. It would, therefore, seem as if he found existing at Constantinople permission given to each individual to determine for himself the question of communicating. And in this connection it is worthy of notice that in the sermons which St. Chysostom is known to have preached in Constantinople not a word is found against non-communicating attendance, while

[1] Sozomen, Bk. vii. ch. xvi. p. 347.

very strong remarks are found on the danger of unworthy reception. The omission might, of course, be accidental, but, on the other hand, Chrysostom is known to have authorized non-communicating attendance in one special instance. When certain Alexandrian monks, expelled from Alexandria, attended worship at Constantinople, the Archbishop permitted them to join in the prayers but not to communicate until their case had been investigated.[1] Thus he permitted them the privilege of sharing in the act of intercession, although not feeling justified in allowing them also to proceed to the act of Communion.[2]

What St. Chrysostom actually taught at Constantinople as to Eucharistic doctrine and practice was as follows. While expounding the Epistle to the Hebrews[3] he contrasted the Jewish sacrifices, whose perpetual repetition proved their ineffectiveness, with the offering of Christ made once for ever. Then he turned to the Eucharist.

"It will be objected," said the preacher, "that we Christians offer every day. We offer, indeed, but by making a memorial of His Death. And that is one, not many. And how is it one, not many? Because it was offered once for all. . . . For we always offer the same; not one lamb to-day and another to-morrow; but always the same. Thus the Sacrifice is one. Or are there many Christs because the Offering is made in many places? Assuredly

[1] Socrates, "H. E.," vi. 9.
[2] See Wilberforce, "Doctrine of the Eucharist," p. 397, *n.*
[3] Hom. xvii. 3; "Ep. ad Hebræos."

not. It is one Christ everywhere. He is fully here, and He is fully there, one Body. As then Christ being offered in many places is one Body, and not many bodies, so there is one Sacrifice" (*i.e.* although offered on many successive occasions).

After this exposition of the doctrine of Eucharistic Offering, St. Chrysostom then turned to the practice.

"Many partake of this Sacrifice once only in the year, others twice, others more frequently. These words, therefore, are profitable to all, even to those who dwell in the desert. For they communicate only once in the year, and often only once in two years. Which of these shall we approve? Neither those who communicate only once a year nor those who communicate often, but those who communicate worthily with clear conscience, pure heart, and blameless life. They who are such, let them always approach; they who are not such, not even once: why? Because they bring upon themselves judgment and condemnation and punishment."[1]

After insisting on this danger of unworthy reception he adds:

"I say these things not to hinder you from receiving once a year, but rather desiring you to approach the Holy Things continually. This is why the priest addresses the people as holy, by that title scrutinizing all, that no one should draw near unprepared." "Now, since it is impossible for a man to know his neighbour's state ('for what man,' says the Apostle, 'can know the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?') this warning is uttered after the whole Sacrifice has been completed, lest

[1] Hom. xvii. 4, in "Ep. ad Hebræos;" "Works," vol. xii. 242.

any one should thoughtlessly and casually approach the spiritual fountain." [1]

Chrysostom dwelt still further on the usual liturgical expression: "Holy Things are for holy persons." "It does not only say," urged Chrysostom, "pure from sins, but Holy. Now, holiness does not consist in the mere deliverance from sins, but in the presence of the Holy Spirit, and plenteousness of good works."

Now, it is very noteworthy that Chrysostom here points out that the warning against unworthy reception was given in the Eucharistic Office after the offering of the Sacrifice had been completed. That is to say, the warning was given to a congregation who had already shared in the Eucharist as an Offering. It bade them, then, even at the last moment, reflect whether they dare approach to share in the Eucharistic Gift. Now, if conscience, in response to the liturgical teaching, "Holy Things are for holy persons," constrained them not to receive, the possible alternatives before them were either to depart, or to remain while others communicated. But, whichever alternative they might select, the fact remained that they had already shared in the Eucharistic offering. There is, of course, a difference between going to the Eucharist already resolved not to receive, and going to the Eucharist to receive, but being warned off from reception by the actual solemnity of the service; but the possibility of the latter shows how great the distinction must be between sharing in the Sacrifice and sharing in the

[1] Hom. xvii. 4.

Sacrament. The teaching of St. Chrysostom at Constantinople should be set beside his teaching at Antioch, since it contains some very important supplementary ideas.

In another sermon,[1] ascribed to St. Chrysostom, and largely reproducing the passages just quoted, further details are given as to Eucharistic practice, presumably at Constantinople. Chrysostom complains of disturbances at the Eucharist. People went out during service. Their excuse was the claims of business. Chrysostom wonders that they could think of other business at such a time, or, indeed, remember that they were on earth at all. They have just sung the hymn, Holy, Holy, with the angels.[2] For this reason Christ called us eagles, saying, "wheresoever the Body is there will the eagles be gathered together"; bidding us rise to heavenly things, borne aloft on the wings of the spirit: whereas, like serpents, we crawl upon the ground, and feed on the dust. Then comes a remarkable passage not found in the former sermon.[3]

"Will you have me point out from what source this disturbance springs? It is because we do not close the doors against you, but allow you to leave the church before the final thanksgiving. This conduct shows disrespect. What is it you are doing, O men? Christ is present, the Angels gather round, the Table is prepared, and you abandon it and depart. Yet you are called to the feast.

[1] Chrysostom, "Works," vol. xii. p. 1004–5; "Eclogæ," Hom. xlvii.

[2] *Ibid.* xii. p. 1004.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 1005.

You would not venture to act so among your friends. Will you have me tell you whose example they follow who withdraw before the thanksgiving?" He answers, "Judas'."[1]

In the sixth century we are told of the practice at Constantinople by the historian Evagrius, who says:

"It is an old custom in the imperial city, that when there remains over a considerable quantity of the holy fragments of the immaculate Body of Christ our God, boys of tender age should be fetched from among those who attend the schools, to eat them."[2]

This seems to point to non-communicating presence: for if the entire congregation present communicated, one would not have expected this emergency to have arisen, at any rate, not so frequently as to be regarded as an old custom.

7. In the Church in France non-communicating attendance was, as is well known, taught and strongly advocated by St. Cæsarius, Bishop of Arles (500 A.D.).

In a sermon he said:

"They who are indifferent, who not only come late to church, but also depart before the mysteries are completed; . . . let them speedily mend their ways."[3]

"If ye did but realize, my brothers, how great grief and how great bitterness is in my soul when I see you

[1] Chrysos., Hom. 47; "Works," vol. xii. p. 1005. For further explanations of Chrysostom, see pp. 130 (Cassandor), 155 (Guest), 165 (Bellarmine), 181, 182 (Bingham), 185, 186 (Waterland), 194 (Wilberforce), 212 (Bright).

[2] Evagrius, born 536 A.D., Bk. xiv. ch. xxxvi. p. 235.

[3] St. Cæsarius, Sermon 173.

reluctant to wait until the Mass be completed, ye would surely have pity both on yourselves and on me.[1] For he who understands what is being enacted in the church when the Divine Mysteries are celebrated, realizes how much evil is done by those who, without grave necessity, leave the church before the Mass is completed.[2]

"I entreat you, dear brethren, and with fatherly earnestness I warn you, that whenever the Mass is celebrated either on the Lord's Day or on the other great festivals, no one depart from the church until the Divine Mysteries are completed.[3]

"For if you carefully reflect, you will realize that the Mass does not consist in the sacred readings recited in church, but in the offering of the oblations and in the consecration of the Body and Blood of the Lord. For the Lessons, whether from the prophets or apostles or evangelists, you can read for yourselves at home; but the consecration of the Lord's Body and Blood you cannot learn and see except in the House of God.

"Whoever then desires to celebrate a complete Mass to the good of his soul, must with outward humility and inward seriousness remain in church until the Lord's Prayer has been repeated and the Benediction given to the people.[4] For when the larger part of the people, in fact, what is worse, when nearly all leave the church after the reading of the Gospel, to whom is the priest to say, 'Lift up your hearts'? How can they reply that they lift them up unto the Lord, when in heart and mind they have departed and are gone out into the streets? Or how are they to say with fear and gladness, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord'?"[5]

[1] St. Cæsarius, Sermon 282.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 3108.
[3] Appendix St. Aug., Sermon 281, p. 3104.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 3105.
[5] *Ibid.* p. 3105.

"Those people," said Cæsarius, "to whom it is not enough to dedicate the entire week to necessary work or thirst for wealth, must needs, after an hour or so during which they seem rather present in body and absent in soul, turn their back upon the sacrifices and on the priests of God . . . Not realizing what it is that they are to wait for, what it is that they abandon, follow the darkness and forsake the light. . . .

"Certainly he has no idea how much good there is in celebrating the Mass, who hastens quickly to leave the church.[1] Thank God, this is not the case with all. There are many who remain with great devotion, and until the blessing is given to the people do not depart from the church, but humbly and reverently plead not only for themselves, but for the souls of others.[2]

"Accordingly, my brothers, warn those who will not wait for the Lord's Prayer and do not receive the Benediction; do not cease to rebuke them and to threaten them, for it is no advantage to them to hear the Gospel if they depart before the divine mysteries are fulfilled.

"Therefore, again and again I entreat and command that every Lord's Day, and more especially on the greater festivals, no one leave the church until the Divine Mysteries are completed."[3]

This teaching of St. Cæsarius shows:

1. That in the Gallican Church of the sixth century a majority of persons left after the Gospel.

2. That a minority practised non-communicating attendance with the entire concurrence of their Archbishop.

[1] Appendix to St. Augustine's Sermons, p. 3105.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 3106. [3] *Ibid.* p. 3106.

3. That the departure of the majority was regarded with profound distress by their Archbishop.

4. And that the best remedy was considered to be an insistence on non-communicating attendance.

5. That no objection on principle was seen in the practice of non-communicating attendance by Catholics of that date.

6. That on the contrary, the practice enjoined by the Archbishop was advocated and enforced by the Bishops of the Province in council.

The sacerdotal blessing came probably in those days before the actual communicating, and not at the conclusion of the Service. It may be, as has been sometimes supposed, that the laity not intending to communicate were by the Council of Agatha permitted to withdraw after the Prayer of Consecration, that is, after the Sacrificial act was completed. But what was expressly ordered is that the Sunday Eucharist be "observed entire by the laity." The people must be present at the Sacrifice. Withdrawal before the Consecration had taken place, absence from the Sacrifice, is expressly forbidden. The Council of Agatha clearly separates the Sacrificial and the Sacramental aspects of the Eucharist. The Sacrifice is regarded as completed before the Communion begins. And indeed, there appears no reason why those who do not communicate should not retire after the Prayer of Consecration, as this Canon is supposed to direct.

Non-communicating attendance was evidently common at Tours in the sixth century. St. Gregory

of Tours, who died in 595, writes of a wealthy woman who offered the Oblation every day for a year in the Church of St. Mary for the repose of her husband's soul. She bought for this purpose the costliest wine, but a thievish deacon appropriated the wine and substituted the sourest of vinegar. And since the woman did not communicate, the fraud was not discovered. A vision warned the widow of the fraud. At length she communicated, and the fraud was revealed.[1]

The causes which brought non-communicating attendance to prevail are to be found in the altered condition of the inner life of the Church. The Church was confronted with two tremendous experiences: the so-called "Conversion" of the Roman Empire, and the incursion of the barbaric tribes. With the nominal Conversion of the Empire the world crept into the Church. While Episcopal Synods were regulated by a monarch whose rudimentary knowledge of the faith corresponded with the fact that he continued unbaptized, an external conformity among the half-converted became not unnaturally the popular rule. What was the Church to do with a courtierly throng whose religious ideal was the example set by the throne? The practice of the Apostolic age when the entire Church met at the Eucharist every Sunday, and every believer received, had faded from the sphere of that which was possible. How could the Church enforce habitual

[1] "St. Gregory Tours," Migne, p. 876. "Muliere non semper a communicandi gratiam accedente."

weekly reception of the Eucharist upon the mixed multitudes of its new adherents?

But this nominal Conversion of the Empire was followed by the second great upheaval: the invasion of the barbaric tribes.

In the period of the Conversion of Europe to Christianity, immense crowds of barbaric races, often with very inadequate perception of what they were embracing, and no less inadequate repudiation of their former errors, entered into the Church and took it by storm. They took their places in the Christian ranks and demanded their Christian privileges. What was to be done for them? The condition of Church life was very different indeed from that of the Apostolic age. To admit them wholesale to Communion would be to open the gate to scandal and sacrilege. To refuse them admission to the Eucharist would involve the Church in the necessity of providing some other service to satisfy the needs of the newly and partially converted.

But to create a new form of worship in place of the Eucharist would be a departure from the practice of the Christian centuries to that time, and also would practically subordinate the worship instituted by Christ to another worship which, however valuable, could not stand on Divine, but only on ecclesiastical authority. Now, to create a substitute for the Eucharist as the ordinary service of non-communicants was what the Mediæval Church steadily refused to do. It clung above everything to the Eucharist. It declined the

responsibility of appointing a popular substitute for the Eucharist. Both by the teaching of individual priests and Bishops, and in the decisions of its Councils, and the devotions of its Liturgies, the Church strongly insisted on the duty of attending the Eucharist as an ordinary rule, and of remaining at the Service until the Oblation had been offered. In this way non-communicating attendance increased.

" The Conversion of the Roman Empire, and still more, the sudden conversion of whole nations of barbarians, rendered utterly impossible the continuance of a discipline framed for the Catacombs or for days when persecution allowed few but the fervent to profess the Christian faith, or to take part in public worship. The Church could not require very frequent Communion from men whose lives unfitted them for so close a union with the Holy One, however much she might lament their unworthiness and urge them to amendment. But to exclude them from assistance at the Holy Sacrifice would have been to deprive them of the most powerful means of obtaining the grace of contrition. . . . The course she really took was to exclude from the Holy Sacrifice those whom she would punish severely for a time, that their very exclusion might teach them respect for holy things. Those also, who by noise and levity showed contempt for the sacred rite, she would rebuke and admonish, and if necessary punish by removal. But she never drove from her temples those who, like the publican, though standing far off from the altar, as judging themselves unworthy to draw near, yet struck their breasts and said, ' God be merciful to me a sinner.' Such as these she would urge to make their repentance speedy and sincere, and to crown it by a worthy Communion. The oftener

such Communions were made the more she would rejoice."[1]

Thus the altered conditions of the Church's life compelled an adaptation of its devotional use. Presence at the Eucharist without reception, or with infrequent reception, prevailed everywhere throughout the West.

"In the eighth century in Ireland there was a seven years' probation for admission into the Society of the Culdees. In the first year the novice was not allowed to communicate at all, only to be present at the Sacrifice. In the second year his Communions began, and gradually increased in number till they mounted to Communion every Sunday in the seventh year."[2]

To give further details down to the Reformation period seems superfluous. It is only necessary to add that at a considerably later time down the Middle Ages, the further custom began that no one except the celebrant received. And beyond all question this extreme result provoked the reaction of the Reformation age.

[1] Bridgett, "History of the Holy Eucharist in Great Britain," i. 49, 50.

[2] Warren, "Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church," p. 141.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EUCHARIST IN THE COUNTER-REFORMATION

1. THE Counter-Reformation view of the Eucharist, as formulated in the Council of Trent, affirms that Christ, in the institution of this Sacrament, "offered up to God the Father His own Body and Blood under the species of bread and wine";[1] and that He commanded the Apostles, and so their successors, to offer the same; that the same Christ is truly offered in one manner in the Eucharist Who once offered Himself in another manner on the altar of the Cross; accordingly, that the Eucharist is a propitiatory sacrifice;[2] that the Father is "appeased by the Oblation thereof; that it secures forgiveness for the living, and also for those departed in Christ who are not yet fully purified."

The only logical conclusion from this strong emphasis on the Godward aspect of the Blessed Sacrament is, that to offer becomes an urgent duty, and a practical blessing with untold results, even when the manward aspect of reception is reduced to a minimum. Accordingly, we find it quite naturally, and, indeed, necessarily affirmed that

[1] Council of Trent, Session xxii. ch. i.
[2] *Ibid.* ch. ii.

"The sacred and holy Synod would fain, indeed, that at each Mass the faithful who are present should communicate, not only in spiritual desire, but also by the sacramental participation of the Eucharist, that thereby a more abundant fruit might be derived to them from this most holy Sacrifice: but not therefore if this be not always done, does it condemn, as private and unlawful, but approves of, and therefore commends, those Masses in which the priest alone communicates sacramentally; since those Masses also ought to be considered as truly common: partly because the people communicate spiritually thereat; partly also because they are celebrated by a public minister of the Church, not for himself only, but for all the faithful who belong to the Body of Christ."[1]

The propositions repudiated in the Counter-Reformation teaching are: (1) that the Eucharistic Sacrifice is

"only a Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, or a bare commemoration of the Sacrifice consummated on the Cross, but not a propitiatory Sacrifice; or that it profits him only who receives; and that it ought not to be offered for the living and the dead";

(2) that the Eucharistic Sacrifice is derogatory to the most holy Sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross.

The Catechism of the Council of Trent expands the same ideas. It teaches that

"the Eucharist was instituted by our Lord for two great purposes, to be the celestial food of the soul, preserving and

[1] Council of Trent, Session xxii. ch. vi., Waterworth's transl.

supporting spiritual life, and to give the Church a perpetual Sacrifice, by which sin may be expiated." [1]

It is further asserted that

"the differences between the Eucharist as a Sacrament and Sacrifice is very great, and is twofold: as a Sacrament it is perfected by Consecration; as a Sacrifice, all its efficacy consists in its Oblation. When deposited in a tabernacle, or borne to the sick, it is, therefore, a Sacrament, not a Sacrifice. As a Sacrament, it is also to the worthy receiver a source of merit, and brings with it all those advantages which we have already mentioned; as a Sacrifice, it is not only a source of merit, but also of satisfaction. As in His Passion our Lord merited and satisfied for us; so in the Oblation of this Sacrifice, which is a bond of Christian unity, Christians merit the fruit of His Passion, and satisfy for sin." [2]

"We confess, therefore, that the Sacrifice of the Mass is one and the same Sacrifice with that of the Cross." [3]

This identification of the Eucharistic Oblation with the Passion, making the action of the Church an extension of the action of Christ, corrects and sets aside the late Mediæval misconception which viewed the Eucharistic Sacrifice as something new and additional to the Sacrifice of the Cross, and which is so vehemently repudiated in the Thirty-nine Articles. What the Catechism of Trent, following the Decrees of the Council, asserted is that the Eucharistic Sacrifice is not only a Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving,[4] or a

[1] Donovan's transl., 1829, p. 247.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 247.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 249.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 249.

commemoration of the Sacrifice of the Cross; but also a Sacrifice of propitiation by which God is appeased and rendered propitious.

"If, therefore, with pure hearts and a lively faith, and with sincere sorrow for past transgressions we immolate and offer in Sacrifice this most holy Victim, we shall no doubt receive from the Lord mercy and grace in seasonable aid. So acceptable to God is the sweet odour of this Sacrifice, that through its Oblation He pardons our sins, bestowing on us the gifts of grace and repentance. This is the solemn prayer of the Church: as often as the commemoration of this Victim is celebrated, so often is the work of our salvation promoted. . . ."[1]

2. In the year 1564, which saw the conclusion of the Council of Trent, the German Emperor Ferdinand, anxious to draw together the discordant elements, Catholic and Protestant, of his distracted empire, wrote a letter to the theologian, George Cassander, entreating him to write in the cause of conciliation. Accordingly, Cassander, a firm Catholic, yet temperate and conciliatory in disposition, and not only able but anxious to understand his opponents' position, and ready to confess the failings of his own Communion, wrote his "Consultation," a tract on the subjects in dispute between Catholic and Protestant.[2]

The confusions of thought which existed in the Reformation period are strikingly illustrated in

[1] Donovan's transl., p. 250.

[2] Cassander, "De Articulis Religionis inter Catholicos et Protestantes Controversis Consultatio" (1577).

Cassander's pages.[1] He first complains that misconceptions prevail through regarding the Eucharist as a mere external act; as though the mere performance of the Eucharistic action could prevail apart from the devotion of the offerer.[2] The value of the Eucharistic Offering rests on the institution and work of Christ.[3] For He it is Who consecrates and offers and propitiates the Father; whereas the human priest is only the servant of Christ and of the Church. But the effectiveness of the Offering cannot be isolated from the subjective devotion of the offerer or those in whose behalf it is offered. That is to say, that the Eucharistic Sacrifice cannot secure its end mechanically.[4] But Cassander frankly confesses that this misconception is largely due to the carelessness with which many a Mass has been celebrated.[5] If it is a notorious fact that many a receiver of the Mass returns from his daily presence to the commission of daily scandals, there is no wonder that misconceptions of the nature of the Eucharistic Offering should arise. Cassander accordingly recommends as a reform the celebration of fewer Masses with greater reverence, and the Ordination only of so many priests as the real needs of the Church demand. For the numerous Masses with scanty congregations he would substitute one general Mass on Sundays and Festivals; or two Masses in places where the population was considerable.

He points out that in the time of St. Leo the Great[6]

[1] Cassander, "Consultatio," p. 206. [2] *Ibid.* p. 206. [3] *Ibid.* p. 208.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 211. [5] *Ibid.* p. 212. [6] *Ibid.* p. 212.

a second celebration was only added on Festivals because the Church could not hold the congregation. (Letter ix. of St. Leo.) The people should be taught to hear Mass devoutly,

"remembering that formerly no one was permitted to be present[1] at the Consecration of the Mysteries except he participated in the Sacrament or at least was worthy to receive, and that accordingly all those who are present at these Mysteries ought to be so prepared as that they can offer the Sacrifice of praise and prayer together with the priest, and participate in the Divine Sacrament, if not by actual reception of the Symbols, yet at least with devoutest disposition."

He reminds them how St. Chrysostom had taught that as it was not lawful for the unbaptized to remain, so neither was it for the baptized if leading a sinful life. They who were unworthy of communion in the Sacrament were also unworthy of communion in the prayers. At the same time, he acknowledges that it was impossible to enforce St. Chrysostom's ideal, which was certainly not realized even in St. Chrysostom's time. But he fully owns that the Protestant objection to private Masses is reasonable. The practice of solitary Masses in which the priest alone communicated took its rise in the Monasteries, and was, at first, forbidden by Councils, on the ground that the *Sursum corda* and "Let us give thanks" were meaningless when none was present to make the response.[2] In fact, the formation of the entire Eucharistic Office implied the presence of

[1] Cassander, "Consultatio," p. 213. [2] *Ibid.* p. 215.

a congregation. In the prayer after the Communion [1] the priest seemed to pray for the communicants only, which became meaningless if none were there. Nor can it be properly called a Communion unless several participate in the same Sacrifice. Cassander then asserts that the infrequent Communion of the laity was a defect for which the clergy were in part responsible,[2] some priests distinctly discouraging weekly Communion on the part of their people, even though sufficiently prepared. He suggests that in the Monasteries the number of Masses should be decreased, and Communion encouraged; just as was done among the Benedictines [3] on the Thursday in Holy Week, when the Abbot celebrated, and all, whether laymen or priests, received the Sacrament at his hands. He adds that St. Francis had recommended the priests of his order to celebrate the Eucharist once only in the day for each community.[4] At the same time, Cassander adds qualifying words to the effect that although it must be acknowledged more agreeable alike to the Divine institution and primitive practice of the Church that there should be a Communion of the laity in every Mass, yet if any priest, influenced by the authority of a practice, now some centuries permitted, should desire to celebrate the Divine Mysteries, even if he alone were to receive the Sacrament, he is not to be discouraged nor forbidden. For he is willing to communicate any who come, and he acts as representing the people.[5] Yet the primitive

[1] Cassander, "Consultatio," p. 217. [2] *Ibid.* p. 218.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 220. [4] *Ibid.* p. 220. [5] *Ibid.* p. 221.

and Apostolic practice is that which should be kept in view, as the ideal course to be pursued.

In point of fact, Cassander is convinced that controversy on the Eucharistic Sacrifice[1] would in all probability not have arisen if the ancient practice of celebrating in the presence of a congregation, and of distributing the Eucharist to the people, had been more carefully retained.

Protestants, indeed, acknowledge that the Eucharist is called a Sacrifice and an Oblation in the ancient Church, but they reject the doctrine that the Body of Christ is truly offered, and that the Eucharist is a Sacrifice for the living and the dead. To which Cassander replies that the ancient Church maintained that the Body and Blood of Christ, once for all offered on the Cross, is a perpetual Victim for all the world, and once offered can never be consumed, but remains effective for the remission of daily sins. Therefore Christ also in heaven, possessing a perpetual Priesthood, daily offers this perpetual Victim when He intercedes for us with the Father. And likewise the Church on earth offers the same one Body of Christ daily in accordance with His command, by mystical representation and commemoration of the Sacrifice once enacted. The consequence of all this is that the Eucharistic Offering is no new Sacrifice, for the Victim is one and the same which was offered upon the Cross, and is still being offered in the heavenly priesthood of our Lord. Thus the ancient Church did not regard

[1] Cassander, "Consultatio," p. 221.

the Eucharist as the mere remembrance of a finished work, but as the actual extended presentation of the same Sacrifice before the Father.

Cassander accordingly maintains that the notion that the Eucharist repeats Christ's Sacrifice is a complete misconception. So far from being a repetition or addition, it is one and the same.

3. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the question rose, among other methods of enforcing at least external allegiance to the Church, whether the French Protestants ought not to be compelled to attend the Mass.

Bossuet objected to enforce attendance at Mass upon those who publicly declared their unbelief. A Catholic magistrate, Lamorgnon de Basville, took the opposite opinion. "Your chief difficulty," writes de Basville to Bossuet, "is that such procedure will not increase their reverence for Mysteries which they contemplate with indifference or positive dislike."[1] Basville concedes that Bossuet would be right if the Protestants were few in number. It would then be wisest to teach them to value the Mass and long for attendance as a high privilege. But not when there are 200,000 Protestants in a single province. Protestants would better understand the true character of the Mass if they heard it said.[2]

Bossuet replied that having carefully studied de Basville's learned letters, he acknowledged that the

[1] Bossuet, "Works," vol. xxvii. p. 136. Letter 35, 1700. A.D.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 138. Letter 36.

Church had enforced conformity, but never at any time compelled heretics to attend the Mass.[1] On the other hand, the Bishop does not say exclude them. If they come voluntarily, it is to be presumed that they come in good faith.[2] But if they were forced to the Mass, and yet refused to confess and communicate, the consequence would be an impression that Catholic religion consisted in an exterior worship.[3]

De Basville replied that certainly attending Mass was not the entire exercise of Catholic religion, but the question was concentrated in this point, because to assist at Mass is one of the principal exercises of religion, and a specially distinctive feature separating Catholicism from the Huguenots, and because assisting at Mass is the first step to communicating.[4] A restriction is not good which excludes men from reaching something higher. To exclude Protestants from Mass is to prevent their complete conversion.[5] Why must we say "all or nothing"? Is there no happy mean? Must we either force them to communicate or exclude them altogether? Is it not better to wait and hope and instruct, and not to drive them away? They come to Mass: we must hope for the rest. Is not this more in harmony with the spirit of the Church than to urge: they won't communicate, therefore exclude them?[6]

At this point a third correspondent entered the

[1] Bossuet, "Works," vol. xxvii. p. 142. [2] *Ibid.* p. 143.
[3] Letter 38. [4] *Ibid.* p. 147. [5] *Ibid.* p. 150.
[6] *Ibid.* p. 151.

discussion, the Bishop of Mirepoix, who, having read Bossuet's letters, made the following remarks upon them:[1]

The Bishop of Mirepoix said that, after carefully considering Bossuet's views, he was convinced that Bossuet's difficulty about constraining Protestants to attend the Mass was due to his regarding the Mass as only advantageous to those who were present in a proper spirit. And undoubtedly the nobler sort of assistance at the Mass does demand a profoundly religious disposition. This, said the Bishop of Mirepoix, was the ground upon which the primitive belief arose that those who were not fit to receive were also not fit to assist at the Holy Mysteries. But, said the Bishop, the Mass is not only a Sacrifice offered by the people: it is also a Sacrifice offered for the people. In the former aspect it necessitates dispositions of faith and love: but in the latter aspect it is beneficial precisely in the same way as prayer is beneficial. The Eucharist, regarded as an Offering made in behalf of sinners, is a prayer, more excellent than any other prayer; for it is a prayer in which Christ offers Himself to the Father, and intercedes for sinners. Now, it has never been considered irreverent that sinners should be present at intercession made in their behalf. And surely, regarded in this light, there is no irreverence in their presence at the Eucharist. The Offering of Christ to the Father most certainly cannot be made by those who adopt the Protestant attitude; but equally certainly it can be

[1] Bossuet, "Works," vol. xxvii. p. 158. Letter 39.

made for them. And their presence may promote the effectiveness of that which is offered on their behalf.

This correspondence was in 1700. It is of interest as showing how the Catholic mind attempted to adapt Eucharistic observance to the changed conditions of the period. Bossuet himself had explained two years before, in his "Variations of Protestants" (1688), that the manner in which the Eucharist benefits the absent and the evil presents no difficulty. It benefits them precisely in the same way as intercessory prayer. The practice of intercession for the wicked implies a belief in the power of grace to overcome their resistance. Precisely in this way the Oblation of the Eucharist benefits the absent, the departed, the evil; because the act of Consecration places before the eyes of God that object most precious in His sight, the Body and Blood of His only Son, and involves a most powerful intercession; although, of course, the hardness of the sinful may render that intercession unavailing. There is surely, contends Bossuet, nothing in this doctrine which ought to repel the Protestant mind. As for Mass without communicants, that, adds Bossuet, is not the fault of the Church, for the Council of Trent desires the faithful to receive as well as to attend.[1]

4. Approximations to the Catholic view were made by the Lutheran Leibnitz, in his mediating and most conciliatory system of Theology in 1684.

[1] Bossuet, "Histoire des Variations," L. III. iv. lvi.; "Works," vol. xvi. p. 123.

"As the dignity and utility of the perpetual Sacrifice are so great, the usage of offering it very frequently to God for the necessities of the faithful, even though it was not always accompanied by public Communion, at last became universal. Of old, indeed, it was the usage that all who were present at the Sacrifice should also partake of the Communion; but, by degrees, the number of communicants was reduced to a few, when the fervour of early piety declined, and well-grounded fears began to be entertained that too frequent Communion and a promiscuous admission of communicants, might lead to a diminution of reverence and be an occasion of sin to many. For if the faithful, in our own days, were all to approach the Table of the Lord after the celebration of the Mysteries, who can doubt that numbers of them would eat unworthily? On the contrary, by allowing intervals between the occasions of Communion, time is given to those who come to the Feast to prepare, so that they may not be found without the nuptial garment. It would have been wrong, nevertheless, that, because communicants were not always found, the Divine honour should therefore suffer any diminution. Hence, when the laudable and pious practice of daily celebrating the most Holy Sacrifice in every church was established, it followed, as a consequence, that the Communion of the priest who offered was regarded as sufficient. This is the origin of what they call Private Masses; and it is not right that the Church should be deprived of their fruit, which undoubtedly is very great, and that the honour of God should be curtailed by their suppression." [1]

5. One of the finest modern expositions of the idea of

[1] Leibnitz's "Theology," p. 133. Transl. by Russell, Introd. p. xcix.

sacrifice is that given by the German theologian, Möhler, in his "Symbolism" and elsewhere.

He teaches that the Church is the perpetuated manifestation of Christ, and that Christ continues through its agency His reconciling and redemptive activities. In the Catholic idea, Christ is not a figure which disappeared eighteen centuries ago; a Saviour of Whom the believer possesses only an historic memory. On the contrary, Christ lives in the Church. It is Christ Who baptizes, confirms, and consecrates. Christ in the Eucharist still offers Himself perpetually for the sins of the world. Christ's Death upon the Cross is part of a vast organic whole; a continuous Sacrifice, of which no part alone is truly complete, but in every part of which the whole is reproduced. The Eucharistic work of Christ is an integral part of His reconciling activity. And without the Eucharistic Offering the Death upon the Cross is not complete. The Sacrifice of the Eucharist is sacrifice in the proper sense of the term. It is propitiation. Christ Who died for us upon the Cross becomes our Sacrifice in the Eucharist. On the Cross He is the Sacrifice for all collectively; in the Eucharist He is the Sacrifice for each individually. Christ present in the Eucharist intercedes for us while offering Himself in Sacrifice to the Father. He is the Victim and the Priest. He is pleading His merits in the midst of His own people. It is not a commemorative act based on a remote event; but a living part of the actual work of reconciliation. We can no more place limits to its efficacy than we can to the Cross itself; for it is one and the same. The

sacrificial effectiveness of the Eucharist no more depends on the physical presence of believers than the effectiveness of the Cross can be limited to those who were there. It is offered alike for the living and for the dead. It is essentially social, for the individual believer shares it as a member of the great community.

Thus in Möhler's view, many of the Protestant objections disappear.

The Eucharistic Sacrifice cannot compromise Christ's merits or involve a derogatory estimate of Christ's Death. On the contrary, it presupposes these merits, and continues the Offering. The reality of the Eucharistic Offering depends on the reality of Christ's Presence. For if He is there, He must of necessity be the Priest that sacrifices Himself. He is extending and applying His mediatorial functions.[1]

[1] See Möhler's "Symbolik," and "Neue Untersuchungen"; Vermeil, "Möhler et l'École Catholique," etc., Tubingen, pp. 333-334.

CHAPTER IX

THE ENGLISH REFORMERS

We come to consider the bearing of the English Reformation on the practice of non-communicating attendance at the Eucharist. It is of primary importance to realize the English Reformers' point of view, and to see what it was that they were chiefly concerned in opposing.

Nothing shows this better than the answers[1] given by the Bishops in 1548, to a series of questions, before they drew up the Order for Administration of the Eucharist in Both Kinds. The questions were, it is commonly believed, drawn up by Archbishop Cranmer, and were circulated among the Bishops, who gave their answers in writing.

The first of the questions circulated among the Bishops was, "Whether the Sacrament of the Altar was instituted to be received of one man for another, or to be received of every man for himself?"

[1] The document will be found in full in Burnet's "History of the Reformation" (Pocock's edition), v. 197 ff. See also Jenkins, "Cranmer's Remains," ii. 178 ff.; Strype; Collier, v. 239 ff., ed. 1852; Dixon, "Hist. Engl. Church," ii. 477; Gasquet and Bishop, "Edward VI., etc.," pp. 82 ff.

Cranmer's own answer was that the Sacrament of the Altar was not instituted to be received of one man for another, but to be received of every man for himself.

The second question was, "Whether the receiving of the said Sacrament of one man do avail and profit any other?"

Cranmer answered that reception could only profit the recipient. Others answered, more cautiously, that reception could only profit the recipient except in so far as the gain of one member in the mystical Body of Christ is the gain of all. Others implied that the question did not cover the whole ground of the purpose of the Eucharist. They distinguished between receiving the Sacrament and offering the Sacrament; the former benefits the recipient only, the latter "availeth and profiteth all, present, absent, live, and dead."

The third question was, "What is the Oblation and Sacrifice of Christ in the Mass?"

Cranmer's own answer was that

"the Oblation and Sacrifice of Christ in the Mass is so called, not because Christ indeed is there offered and sacrificed by the priest and the people (for that was done but once by Himself upon the Cross), but it is so called, because it is a memory and representation of that very true Sacrifice and immolation which before was made upon the Cross."

The Bishop of Lincoln answered that "there is properly no oblation nor sacrifice" in the Mass, "but a remembrance of the one Oblation of Christ upon the Cross made once for all."

These represented the Reforming school. They stand in stronger light by contrast with the answers of the Bishops of the older school. According to the Bishop of Durham, for example,

"the oblation and sacrifice of Christ in the Mass, is the presenting of Christ by the priest, in commemoration of His Passion, being one eternal and permanent Sacrifice, present in the sacrament of His omnipotent word left to us, to have His Death and Passion in remembrance, with giving thanks for the same, and prayer of the minister, and them which be present, that the same may be available to the whole Church of Christ, both quick and dead in the faith of Christ."

The fourth question was, "Wherein consisteth the Mass by Christ's institution?"

Cranmer himself gave to this question the reply that the Mass, by Christ's institution consisteth in those things which be set forth in the Evangelists. Ridley became more explicit. He said that the representation and commemoration of Christ's Death and Passion, said and done in the Mass, is called the Sacrifice, oblation, or immolation of Christ, not in reality but symbolically.

The older school affirmed that it consisted principally in the consecration, oblation, and reception of the Body of Christ.

The fifth question was, "When did the practice first begin in the Church that the priest alone should receive the Sacrament?"

Six or seven hundred years after Christ, said

Cranmer. It was not done for four or five hundred years at least, said Ridley. But several Bishops asserted that the practice dated from the period when the devotion of the people began to decay. The people would not come to receive the Sacrament, and so the priests were compelled to receive it alone.

Then came the critical question: "Whether it be convenient that the same custom continue still within this realm?" Cranmer and Ridley both desired to revive the primitive usage, as founded upon Scripture, and declared against solitary Communion.

"The rest of the Bishops determine the other way. They wish the priest might have some of the congregation to receive with him at every Mass: however, if the coldness of their devotion makes them decline communicating, they think it both lawful and convenient that the priest should say Mass and receive the Sacrament alone." [1]

A searching criticism has been made by two Roman writers upon the Episcopal answers to these questions.[2]

"The point of questions 1, 2, and 5, taken together, was to elicit opinions as to whether, apart from Communion, the Mass had any virtue in itself, or whether its sole virtue for the individual was in his own act of Communion. Cranmer and the rest of the innovating party answered by saying, that the virtue of the Sacrament did not extend beyond the reception. This struck at the Mass as a Sacrifice propitiatory for the living."

[1] Page 243.

[2] "Edward VI. and the Book of Common Prayer," by Gasquet and Bishop, 1891, p. 86.

But this criticism is not sufficiently precise to do justice to Cranmer's view. He did not say that the virtue of the Sacrament did not extend beyond the reception; but that the reception of the Sacrament only profited the recipient. This does not of itself determine whether the effectiveness of the Sacrament is coextensive with reception. And Cranmer also added that the Mass was "a memory and representation of that very true Sacrifice and immolation which before was made upon the Cross." This description clearly introduces a second aspect into the Service. It becomes at once a question whether this representation of the Sacrifice upon the Cross can only benefit those who receive. It is true that this question was not faced; but neither was it denied. The relation between the Sacrifice of the Cross, that is, the actual Death and the representation of that Sacrifice in the Eucharist, is not considered, still less explained by Cranmer in his answers. And the careful and conciliatory language of the Bishop of Durham shows how possible it was to distinguish, and yet to identify the Sacrifice on the Cross with the presenting of Christ by the priest. It must be remembered also that the whole purpose of Cranmer's questions was to abolish solitary reception by the priest, to restore the habitual Communion of the people, to insist that reception of the Sacrament by the priest alone benefited the recipient but not the non-recipient. Our present interest in these questions is with their bearing on the practice of non-communicating attendance. There is no reason, from anything in Cranmer's

replies, to suppose that he was attacking that practice; or, indeed, to suppose that such an idea had come within the horizon of his thoughts. There is independent evidence by which this conclusion is confirmed. But the conclusion itself seems clear.

I

The direction as to Communion in the first English Prayer-book of 1549 was placed after the offertory sentences, and was to the following effect:

"Then so many as shall be partakers of the Holy Communion shall tarry still in the Quire, or in some convenient place nigh the Quire, the men on the one side, and the women on the other side. All other (that mind not to receive the said Holy Communion) shall depart out of the Quire, except the ministers and clerks."

Scudamore, in his opposition to non-communicating attendance, suggested that the sentence was badly revised, and was intended to say that all other (that mind not to receive the said Holy Communion) shall depart out of the *church*. But this is exactly what the rubric does not say. There is all the difference between depart out of the church, and depart out of the choir, for the former forbids non-communicating attendance, and the latter allows it. Indeed, there are two facts which ought to have effectually prevented any one from supposing that the direction to depart out of the choir is a case of careless revision. One is that the structure of the 1549 Office clearly divides the Service

into two parts: first the Offering, then afterwards the reception. The other is that the subsequent rubrics are carefully consistent with this direction. For the priest is directed to address the Invitation, turning himself "toward those that come to the Holy Communion"; and it is further ordered that the "General Confession be made in the name of all those that are minded to receive the Holy Communion." Both rubrics imply the presence of others who did not intend to receive.

Indeed, Scudamore himself acknowledges that as the language stands there cannot be the slightest doubt of its meaning.

> "However, as the rubric was published, and as we must take it, it certainly does not forbid the presence in *church* of those who do not receive, but only expels them from the quire."[1]

The form of this acknowledgment is, however, unfortunate, and somewhat misleading. Its use of the word "expel" puts a wrong construction on the intention. For surely the intention of directing the departure of non-communicants out of the choir is explained by the very next rubric which says, "Then shall the minister take so much Bread and Wine as shall suffice for the persons appointed to receive the Holy Communion." That is to say, that the separation of the communicants from the non-communicants enabled the celebrant to know how much bread and wine would suffice for consecrating. Accordingly, there was

[1] Scudamore, "Communion of the Laity," p. 96.

no sort of intention to "expel" the non-communicants. It was a regulation for the convenience of those who received. In point of fact, Scudamore himself goes on to say that

"Cranmer, who was at the head of the commission for the construction of this Liturgy, was certainly willing at that time to permit the presence of non-communicants. In fact, in his reply to the Devonshire rebels in the same year, while arguing against forced Communion, he speaks in a manner which, unless he purposely so expressed himself as to avoid raising the question, seems to imply that the alternative of sending them out of church had not yet presented itself to his mind."[1]

What the Devonshire rebels demanded was: "We will have the Mass in Latin, as was before, and celebrated by the priest, without any man or woman communicating with him."[2] Cranmer, in his answer, appealed to primitive custom.

"You say you will have nobody to communicate with the priest. Hear, then, what divers canons, decrees, and general Councils say clean against you. There is one decree which saith this: 'When the consecration is done, let all the people receive the Communion, except they will be put out of the church."

But what Cranmer opposed was solitary Mass rather than non-communicating attendance, for he is careful to add:

[1] Scudamore, "Communion of the Laity," p. 101, ed. i., 1855.
[2] "Cranmer's Remains," by Jenkins, vol. ii. p. 213.

"And although I would exhort every good Christian man often to receive the Holy Communion, yet I do not recite all these to the intent that I would in this corrupt world (when men live so ungodly as they do) that the old canons should be restored again, which commanded every man present to receive the Communion with the priest. Which canons, if they were now used, I fear that many would receive it unworthily. But I speak, then, to condemn your Article, which would have nobody, neither man nor woman, to be communicated with the priest." [1]

The fact is that the Devonshire rebels,

"in describing the forms of worship which they desired to revive, were giving an accurate representation of what religion had formerly been in this country, and what, in their judgment, it ought still to be." [2]

And Cranmer in his reply was, of course, dealing with existing controversy: "his desire was . . . to convince the nation what need there was that such matters should be abolished as . . . solitary Masses." [3] Non-communicating attendance he was evidently not prepared to attack.

The presence of non-communicants is clearly implied in Bishop Ridley's "Injunctions of 1530," in which he gives orders about the position of the Holy Table, "that the ministers with the communicants may have their place separated from the rest of the people." A very similar rule of Bishop Hooper, of Gloucester, in

[1] Jenkins, "Cranmer's Remains," vol. ii. p. 218.
[2] *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 65.
[3] Strype's "Cranmer," vol. i. p. 266.

1551, expresses the same intention in plainer terms, "so that the ministers and communicants may be seen, heard, and understood of all the people there being present." [1]

To this may be added the case of Robert Ferrar, Bishop of St. Davids from 1548 to 1555. He was befriended by the Protector Somerset, who advanced him to the Bishopric. But after Somerset's fall he became, in 1551, the object of a bitter attack before the Privy Council. Among the charges against him was that

"he being often in Caermarthen and other places, in the chancel at the time of Holy Communion, not only tarried there himself, neither communicating, nor ministering, bareheaded and uncoiffed, reverently kneeling; but also permitting the people there to continue, the chancel and choir full, kneeling and knocking their breasts: which manner is yet used in all the diocese, without any reformation or gainsay of him or any of his officers." [2]

This was the entire Puritan charge against Ferrar in 1551. In 1555 he was charged under Mary as a Protestant.

That non-communicating attendance was permitted in the first English Reformation Prayer-book is definitely recognized by Bucer, to whom belongs the distinction of being the first to raise objections to the

[1] Ridley's "Injunction for London Diocese," p. 5; Frere's "Visitation Articles," vol. ii. p. 244; Hooper's "Articles," *ibid.* p. 277.

[2] Foxe's "Acts and Monuments," vol. vii. p. 6, ed. 1870.

English use. In his censures of the English Book he objected to the use of the first part of the Service without proceeding to an actual Communion; and to the practice of non-communicants remaining in Church.[1]

II

In the second Prayer-book of 1552 an Exhortation was interpolated after the offertory, for use "at certain times when the Curate shall see the people negligent to come to the Holy Communion." In this Exhortation, after strongly urging reception of the Sacrament upon the people, comes the well-known passage:

"And whereas ye offend God so sore in refusing this holy Banquet, I admonish, exhort, and beseech you, that unto this unkindness ye will not add any more: which thing ye shall do, if ye stand by as gazers and lookers on them that do communicate, and be no partakers of the same yourselves. For what thing can this be accounted else than a further contempt and unkindness unto God? Truly it is a great unthankfulness to say Nay when ye be called: but the fault is much greater when men stand by, and yet will neither eat nor drink this holy Communion with other. I pray you what else can this be but even to have the mysteries of Christ in derision? It is said unto all, 'Take ye and eat; Take, and drink ye all of this; Do this in remembrance of Me.' With what face, then, or with what countenance, shall ye hear these words? What will this be else but a neglecting, a despising, and mocking of the Testament of Christ? Wherefore, rather than you

[1] Frere, "History of the Prayer-book," p. 73.

should so do, depart you hence, and give place to them that be godly disposed."

Now, it has been observed that when this Exhortation was introduced the rubric about departing out of the choir was at the same time omitted; and the inference has been made that since the non-communicants were ordered to withdraw altogether, even from the sight of the Holy Mysteries, the rubric directing their withdrawal from the choir became superfluous. But this is a complete misunderstanding of the situation. Why was the rubric directing departure from the choir omitted in 1552? To answer this it is necessary to ask another question. Why was it originally put in? How came the non-communicants to be "in the choir" at all? The real explanation is that the Edwardine Injunctions of 1547 ordered that "a strong chest with a hole in the upper part thereof" was to be provided, which chest the clergy were to "set and fasten near to the high altar, to the intent that parishioners should put into it their oblations and alms for their poor neighbours."[1] Thus, it appears, that in the ritual of 1549 the people came up into the choir to make their offerings in person, and to place them in the chest fixed near the high altar. For the rubric of 1549 directed that, "while the Clerks do sing the offertory, so many as are disposed shall offer to the poor men's box every one according to his ability," etc. This

[1] "Royal Injunctions of Edward VI.," § 29; Frere's "Visitation Articles," vol. ii. p. 127.

explains how the people came to be in the choir. The rubric then ordered

"so many as shall be partakers of the Holy Communion shall tarry still in the Quire, or in some convenient place nigh the Quire. . . . All other (that mind not to receive the said Holy Communion) shall depart out of the Quire."

But in 1552 the rubric made a different arrangement for the collection of the people's offerings. It now directed "then shall the Churchwardens, or some other by them appointed, gather the devotion of the people, and put the same into the poor men's box." Thus the people did not come in the choir to present their offerings in person. Consequently, the rubric to depart out of the choir became meaningless, and was cancelled simply because the new regulations had rendered it obsolete. The omission was not therefore due to the reason which has been sometimes assigned. It was not because non-communicants were ordered to depart out of the church. It had nothing to do with that matter at all.

If this passage in the Exhortation is to be rightly understood, the contemporary circumstances which called them into existence must be remembered. There were the solitary Masses in the absence of a congregation, and the public Eucharists in which probably no one except the priest received. The demand of the Devonshire rebels doubtless represented a very considerable portion of the public mind; that the Mass should be "celebrated by the priest, without any man

or woman communicating with him." This explains the Reformers' strong insistence upon reception. The language is addressed to habitual non-communicants who "have the mysteries of Christ in derision." The persons contemplated are said to "stand by as gazers and lookers on them that do communicate": a picturesque descriptive account of indifferent behaviour, but wholly inappropriate to describe those who were engaged in pleading Christ's sacrificial Death. Such expressions, so far from being applicable to the religious-minded pleader of Christ's Offering, would be a caricature of his intentions, and an insult to his sincerity. The conduct of the devout recipient who added to his Communions non-communicating attendance could not fairly be said to be "a neglecting, despising, and mocking of the Testament of Christ." Nor could he feel that the words, "Depart you hence, and give place to them that be godly disposed," could, in any reasonable construction, apply to him.

Thus the habitual communicant, who at other times also pleaded the Offering without reception, might have listened serenely to this Exhortation, calmly sure that the warning was not intended for him. His intelligence and his conscience alike would refuse to allow him to identify himself with the idle gazer and contemptuous looker-on. If it is true that the practice of non-communicating attendance began to diminish from the date of this Exhortation, the fact may be considered due to the influence of Protestant authorities, who certainly in some cases adopted methods of

exclusion which the rules of the Prayer-book and the language of the Exhortation did not justify. It ought to be remembered that the language of this Exhortation is not one bit more forcible than that of St. Chrysostom, upon which, indeed, it is very possibly modelled; and yet the language of Chrysostom had no effect in preventing the continuance and growth of the practice of non-communicating attendance.

It must also be remembered that the Exhortation itself did not form part of the regular Service, but was only directed for occasional use "at certain times when the Curate shall see the people negligent to come to the Holy Communion"; whereas there was an Exhortation ordered for perpetual recital, and in it the words occur, "Draw near and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort, make your humble confession to Almighty God before this congregation here gathered together in His holy Name." Now, while it would be possible to interpret these words as a reference only to communicants if we abstract them from their historic associations, it seems quite impossible to do so if we recollect the practice prevailing up to the very moment that this Exhortation was composed.

Probably that which promoted the decrease of non-communicating attendance was the rearrangement of the prayers in the Eucharistic Office of 1552, whereby the two aspects of Offering and Reception, clearly distinguished in the two parts of the Office of 1549, were reduced to a state of unprecedented confusion. But it is not probable that this confusion was perpetrated

with the intention of discouraging the non-communicating attendance of habitual communicants, so much as to encourage reception on the part of the habitually neglectful.

III

In the third or Elizabethan Revision this passage in the Exhortation was left unchanged.

1. There still exists the important letter of Bishop Guest to Sir William Cecil, in which the Bishop informs the Statesman that in the practice of the early centuries "they only did remain which did receive";[1] that "the Creed is ordained to be said only of the communicants"; that

> "the learners were shut out as the Creed was said; because it is the prayer of the faithful only, which were but the communicants. For that they which did not receive were taken for that time as not faithful. Therefore Chrysostom saith that they which do not receive be as men doing penance for their sins."[2]

Bishop Guest reveals his school of thought by his notorious comment on Chrysostom's words, "He which is not fit to receive is not fit to pray": "Which," said the Bishop, "were not true, if prayer were not of as much importance as the Communion."[3] If the Bishop was prepared to carry this criticism into effect

[1] Cardwell, "History of Conferences," pp. 48, ff.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 51.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 51.

he must have taught that those who were unfit to communicate were equally unfit to be present at Morning Prayer; in which case he would have reduced the congregation at Mattins to very inconsiderable dimensions. It is somewhat difficult perhaps to make the Bishop's principles cohere. But probably what he meant to do was to discourage the presence of non-communicants at the Eucharist, and to secure their dismissal before the Nicene Creed.

2. Bishop Jewel, in his celebrated sermon at Paul's Cross in 1560, appealed to the Fathers of the Church for the first six hundred years, chiefly to show that the practice of solitary Mass was not a primitive tradition. He appealed to St. Chrysostom as "sharply rebuking the people for refraining from the Holy Communion." He declared that the ancient custom, still existing in the time of St. Gregory the Great, was "that they that might not communicate with the rest, should depart from the church, and not be present at the Communion";[1] which, of course, is perfectly true of those who "might not communicate," such as the unbaptized and certain classes of penitents. Jewel, however, went so far as to say that

> "by the order of the first primitive Church there could be no private Mass, and that whoso would not communicate with the priest was then commanded out of the congregation."[2]

This sermon produced upon Jewel's contemporary,

[1] Jewel's "Works," vol. i. p. 28.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 27.

the Roman controversialist Harding, the impression that Jewel desired all non-communicants to be by law excluded from the Service. "Verily," said Harding, "it appeareth, by his sermon, that all the people ought to receive, or to be driven out of the church."[1] Jewel, however, himself appears to have been surprised at this inference. "You know," he answered, "that this is neither the doctrine nor the practice of our Church. Howbeit, the ancient doctors have both taught so, and also practised the same."[2] Here, then, while Jewel maintains as his interpretation of history, that the exclusion of non-communicants was the rule of the Primitive Church, he says expressly that it is neither the doctrine nor the practice of the Church of England. Thus, in 1565, Bishop Jewel implies that the Exhortation in the Communion Service was not intended to drive non-communicants out of church. At the same time, it is perfectly obvious that Jewel's personal influence would discourage such attendance, owing to the fact that the conception of the Eucharist as an Offering found no place in his teaching. He held, indeed, that we offer in the Eucharist ourselves and our alms and our prayers, but not the Body of Christ.[3] Moreover, in his account of the penitential discipline of the Early Church, he omitted to mention that class which was allowed to remain but not to receive.[4] He

[1] Jewel's "Reply to Harding," Article i. div. 32; "Works," vol. i. p. 304.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 309.

[3] Jewel's "Reply to Harding," Article i. div. 8, "Works," vol. i. p. 194.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 230.

appears to have held that the Offering in the Eucharist is the offering of Christ to the communicant. Thus he translates Augustine's words,[1] "Nonne semel immolatus est Christus in Seipso, et tamen in sacramento . . . omni die populis immolatus" by "was not Christ once offered in Himself? yet, that notwithstanding, by way of a sacrament, . . . He is offered every day *unto the people*." But this rendering is quite incredible. Augustine is here concerned to show the parallel and connection between the Passion and the Eucharist. The Passion, although it really took place centuries ago, is in the Eucharist sacramentally celebrated.

"Was not Christ once for all offered up in His own Person as a Sacrifice? and yet, is He not likewise offered up in the Sacrament as a Sacrifice, not only in the special solemnities of Easter, but also daily among our congregations; so that the man who, being questioned, answers that He is offered as a Sacrifice in that ordinance, declares what is strictly true. For if Sacraments had not some points of real resemblance to the things of which they are the Sacraments, they would not be Sacraments at all."[2]

This translation is that by Cunningham, in Marcus Dods' English version of Augustine's writings.[3] It was not rendered with any reference to Bishop Jewel's use of the word. It is surely the only rendering which the passage taken as a whole admits. For the whole drift of Augustine's argument is that there is a close

[1] St. Augustine, "Ep.," 23, "ad Boniface."
[2] *Ibid.* "Ep.," 98, "ad Boniface," § 9.
[3] Marcus Dods' translation of Augustine, vol. xiii. p. 22.

correspondence between Christ's Offering on the Cross, and the Offering in the Eucharist. The term "Sacrifice" is, Augustine asserts, applicable to both. Moreover, if the phrase "populis immolatus" is susceptible of the rendering "offered to the people," it is obvious that this cannot be the meaning of the same word "immolatus" in the first half of the sentence. The sentence, "Was not Christ once for all offered up in His own Person as a Sacrifice," cannot possibly mean offered up to the people. It can only mean offered up to the Father. Consequently, the parallelism requires that in the Eucharist Christ should be offered up to the Father. The consequence of Jewel's mistranslation is that the Eucharistic Sacrifice is denied. Moreover, Jewel held the extraordinary opinion that "the receiving was first and the consecration afterwards." He taught that

"Christ first took the bread and blessed it: and brake it: and gave it, and said, 'Take ye: eat ye:' and afterwards this being said and done, He added the words of consecration, 'This is My body.' Thus the Evangelists witness . . . that the receiving was first, and the consecration afterwards." [1]

The Bishop's editor, Jelf, not unnaturally observes that "Jewel's reasoning upon this point appears as questionable as it is unnecessary to his argument." But none the less, it is Jewel's reasoning. And the influence of such a theory upon non-communicating attendance could only be in the highest degree discouraging.

[1] Jewel, "Works," vol. i. p. 198.

3. The exclusion of non-communicants from the church was undoubtedly desired by the Lower House of Convocation in 1562, when it sent up the following petition to the Upper House of Canterbury:

"That no person abide within the church during the time of the Communion unless he do communicate. That is, they shall depart immediately after the Exhortation be ended, and before the confession of the communicants." [1]

But this petition failed to secure its object, for no regulation was made.

The petition clearly shows that, in the opinion of the petitioners, the Exhortation of 1558 did not secure the withdrawal of non-communicants; and that if that withdrawal was to be secured, further steps were essential. Such steps the Bishops refused to take. It should be added that the Lower House itself was about equally divided upon the point: for we are told that "the determination of the matter depended upon a second scrutiny of the numbers." [2] In any case, it was rejected by the Upper House, and this rejection, be it remembered, was made in the memorable Convocation which passed the Thirty-nine Articles. If, then, the Articles say that "the Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon . . . but that we should duly use them," [3] the very Convocation which adopted that statement declined to pass a canon enforcing the exclusion of non-recipients.

[1] Wilkins' "Concilia," vol. iv. p. 241. [2] *Ibid.* p. 240.
[3] Article XXV.

4. This leads us to consider what that sentence in Article XXV. really means.

And here may be placed the explanation of the passage by W. R. Churton, according to whom the intention was to bring into due prominence the primary end of our Saviour's institution, and its use as a Sacrament for conveying grace to the souls of the faithful.

"This is certainly the meaning of the clause in the Twenty-fifth Article of Religion. . . . In quoting this in controversy, on either side of the questions debated amongst us, the chief point has been missed. The language is scholastic and technical, and the assertion is that the Sacraments were instituted by Christ for use; the *usus* being another word for *dispensatio*, or the dispensing of the Sacraments to the people; and 'right' is not *recte*, but *rite*, and refers to the office of the minister, not to the moral state of the recipient. It is therefore intended that it is our duty, as ministers of the Gospel, to invite people to take this Holy Sacrament to their comfort, and to use the institution of Christ according to His appointment, and not to urge them to assist as spectators of a ceremony." [1]

5. There is another factor which should be taken into account in interpreting the Exhortation as permitted to stand in the Elizabethan Revision: and that is the Queen's well-known policy of comprehension. If she desired, as we know she did, to secure the attendance of Roman Catholics at the Anglican Service, she is scarcely likely to have defeated her own object by

[1] W. R. Churton, "Theological Papers and Sermons," 1902, p. 71.

prohibiting that non-communicating presence, which of all things was precisely the practice most calculated to reconcile them.

6. In the Fifth Book of Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity," which was published in 1597,[1] the Puritan criticisms against the Anglican Eucharistic practices are given. It appears that by this time attendance at the Eucharist had been reduced to a very exiguous proportion of the people.

"We are condemned," says Hooker, "inasmuch as when there have been store of people to hear sermon and service in the church, we suffer the Communion to be ministered to a few. It is not enough that our Book of Common Prayer hath godly exhortations to move all thereunto which are present. For it should not suffer a few to communicate; it should, by ecclesiastical discipline and civil punishment, provide that such as would withdraw themselves might be brought to communicate, according both to the Law of God and the ancient Church Canons."[2]

Such was the Puritan criticism. The discouragement of non-communicating attendance had considerably reduced the congregation at the Eucharist. The absentees were now, according to the Puritan view, to be coerced into remaining and receiving. Compulsory reception of the Eucharist would, in their opinion, restore the Church to its ancient state.

"The Prayer-book," said Cartwright, "ought to provide that those which would withdraw themselves should be

[1] *Cf.* Paget, "Introduction," p. 123.
[2] Book v. ch. lxviii. p. 1.

by ecclesiastical discipline at all times, and now also, under a Godly Prince, by civil punishment, brought to communicate."[1]

Hooker's characteristic answer to this complaint about the paucity of communicants was:

"If they require at Communions frequency, we wish the same, . . . if they encourage men thereunto, we also (themselves acknowledge it) are not utterly forgetful to do the like; if they require some public coaction for remedy of that wherein by milder and softer means little good is done, they know our laws and statutes provided in that behalf, whereunto whatsoever convenient help may be added more by the wisdom of man, what cause have we given the world to think that we are not ready to hearken to it, and to use any good means of sweet compulsion to have this high and heavenly banquet largely furnished? Only we cannot so far yield as to judge it convenient that the holy desire of a competent number should be unsatisfied, because the greater part is careless and undisposed to join with them."[2]

Hooker then admits that the existing methods of reform had not succeeded in bringing the people to become communicants. The "greater part" of the people were still "careless and undisposed." He is evidently open to suggestions, and will pay attention to "whatsoever convenient help may be added more by the wisdom of man." All he stipulates is that the celebration of the Eucharist is not to be made frequent in order to secure a larger number.

[1] Notes to Hooker, *ibid.* p. 375.
[2] Hooker, book v. ch. lxviii. p. 10.

occasion. He cannot yield that "the holy desire of a competent number," that is, three or four, "should be unsatisfied because the greater part is careless and undisposed to join with them." We shall find this same argument pressed in Cosin's time to its logical conclusions.

To the objection that "men should not be permitted a few by themselves to communicate when so many are gone away," on the ground that the Sacrament is a Sacrament of Unity, Hooker replied:

"I ask then on which side unity is broken, whether on theirs that depart or on theirs who, being left behind, do communicate? First, in the one it is not denied but that they may have reasonable causes of departure, and that then even they are delivered from just blame. Of such kind of causes two are allowed, namely, danger of impairing health and necessary business requiring our presence otherwise. And may not a third cause, which is *unfitness* at the present time, detain us as lawfully back as either of these two? True it is that we cannot hereby altogether excuse ourselves, for that we ought to prevent this and do not. But if we have committed a fault in not preparing our minds before, shall we therefore aggravate the same with a worse, the crime of unworthy participation? He that abstaineth doth want for the time that grace and comfort which religious communicants have, but he that eateth and drinketh unworthily receiveth death, that which is life to others turneth in him to poison." [1]

non-communicating attendance Hooker has not o say: neither for nor against. Whatever

[1] Hooker, book v. ch. lxviii. p. 10.

inferences might be drawn from Hooker's view of the Eucharist, he does not himself draw that inference. Still less does he teach that the practice was forbidden by the English Church.

7. The theories held by Anglicans in the opening years of the seventeenth century with regard to the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist were not of such a character as to recognize presence without reception. When James I. argued against the Roman practice of private Masses, Cardinal Bellarmine answered from St. Chrysostom's famous words that reception of the Eucharist by the priest alone already existed as a practice in the Church of the fourth century. For St. Chrysostom said, "In vain is the daily Oblation when there is no one to receive." If the Royal controversialist attempted to evade this argument with the criticism that if the daily Oblation was made in vain, then it ought not to have been offered, Bellarmine replied that the question is not whether St. Chrysostom ought to have offered it under these circumstances, but whether as a matter of fact he actually did offer. And it is obvious that he did. We cannot, therefore, allow that the Eucharist should not be offered in the absence of recipients. For surely, if this had been wrong, St. Chrysostom would not have continued to do it. Accordingly, when St. Chrysostom says that the daily Oblation was offered in vain, he means in vain relatively to communicants; he does not mean in vain relatively to the Father in its aspect as an Offering. Bellarmine contends that Chrysostom's view was the same as that of the Council of Trent; that

the Offering and the reception should both take place; but yet that if the people decline to receive, the Offering to God is not on that account to be omitted.

Bellarmine then asserted that the chief reason why modern objectors resent the celebration of the Mysteries without communicants is that they do not believe that the Eucharist was divinely designed as an Offering to God. For them it is only a Sacrament of Communion. If they did but acknowledge the Sacrifice, they would realize that it could be offered to God for the people; and that even if the people did not participate in the Sacrifice by reception, they did participate in it by pleading.[1]

King James at this point retired from controversy and resumed the cares of State, handing over the Eucharistic discussion to his theologian, Bishop Andrewes. Bishop Andrewes greatly resented Bellarmine's way of accounting for objections to private Masses as caused by the innovators' unbelief that the Eucharist is a Sacrifice; an unbelief which naturally incapacitated them from understanding that it is possible to participate in the Sacrifice by pleading without participating in it by reception. This practice, says Andrewes, fills his Anglican associates with amaze. They believe that the Eucharist was instituted by the Lord as a commemoration of Him; indeed, as a commemoration of His Sacrifice; or (if it be lawful so to speak) as a Commemorative Sacrifice; and not only as a sacrament or spiritual sustenance. This, says Bishop Andrewes, his associates admit. But they deny that the two aspects

[1] Bellarmine, "Apologia"; "Collected Works," t. xii. p. 156.

thus instituted simultaneously and conjoined by the Lord can be separated by man, whether through the people's negligence or through the avarice of the priest. The Sacrifice which is there is a Eucharistic Sacrifice; and the law of that kind of sacrifice is that he who offers also participates. But he participates by receiving and eating, as the Saviour commanded. For to participate in pleading is but a novel and modern kind of participation.[1]

This theory of Bishop Andrewes would, if pressed to its logical conclusion, prevent the presence at the Eucharist of any persons who did not intend to receive. And it shows that Bellarmine was perfectly correct in asserting that his opponent's view of the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist was not the same as his own. Andrewes clearly regarded the Eucharist as a Sacrifice in the sense that it was a commemoration of a Sacrifice. He hesitates to call the Eucharist a Commemorative Sacrifice. For him propitiation is clearly past. The thought that Christ, present in the Eucharist as Priest, still perpetuates His one Sacrifice, is not within Bishop Andrewes' horizon. And then he still further narrows his view by identifying the Eucharist with one type of Hebrew offering, instead of regarding it as the consummation of all pre-Christian offerings.

Thus Andrewes reaches his conclusion that to participate in pleading is but a novel and modern kind of participation. It is strange that one so deeply read in patristic literature did not consider in this connection

[1] Bishop Andrewes, "Responsio ad Bellarmine," pp. 248-250.

the universal primitive practice of Eucharistic intercession for the absent and the dead. Historically it is quite untrue that to participate in pleading is but a novel and modern kind of participation. Thus, if Bishop Andrewes would condemn the presence of offerers who do not receive, he did so on grounds which are unhistorical, and on a theory of sacrifice which is inadequate and uncatholic. Nor is the Bishop's inference, from our Lord's having simultaneously instituted and conjoined the two aspects, that they cannot be separated by man, any more secure. For it is not a necessary interpretation; and it has the age-long practice of East and West against it.

8. The teaching of Archbishop Laud on the subject may be partly gathered (1) from the Scottish Communion Office approved by him in 1637. The Warning in the Exhortation of 1552 was still retained, but those who care to receive the Holy Communion were expressly invited:

> "Draw near and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort, make your humble confession to Almighty God before this congregation here gathered together in His Holy Name, meekly kneeling upon your knees."

The presence of others beside communicants is contemplated in these words. And since Archbishop Laud strongly approved this book, he cannot be classed among the opponents of non-communicating presence. (2) Then further, Archbishop Laud, in his Order for the Coronation Service, expressly lays down that "no one is

to receive except some eight or ten of the great officials concerned in the rite." [1]

The force of this rubric in the Coronation Service cannot be fairly parried by observing that the occasion is exceptional; for if the practice is wrong, it ought not to be permitted at all; and certainly not on an occasion when conformity to lawful principles is exceptionally necessary. A Coronation Office cannot justly claim the liberty to override the intentions of Christ's sacramental institutions. If Archbishop Laud had thought the practice unlawful he could not have sanctioned its deliberate flaunting in the face of the chief personages of the nation. The Archbishop was not a courtier of that school.

9. In the first series of Notes on the Prayer-book, printed in 1619, forming volume 5 of the works of Bishop Cosin, the warning about gazers and lookers-on is interpreted as

"a religious invective . . . against the irreligious custom of the people then nursed up in popery to be present at the Communion and to let the priest communicate for them all; from whence arose the abuse of priest's Masses; a practice so repugnant to the Scripture, and to the use of the ancient Church, that at this day not any but the Romish Church throughout all the Christian world are known to use it, as the Greek, Syrian, Armenian, and Ethiopian Liturgies do testify; nay, the Roman Liturgy itself is herein full against the Roman practice." [2]

"That is," says the editor, "all these services suppose

[1] *Cf. Christian Remembrancer*, vol. xxxv. p. 21.

[2] Cosin's "Works," vol. v. p. 98.

the presence of communicants."[1] Yes, but not the absence of non-communicants. The teaching of Bishop Cosin was

"better were it to endure the absence of the people, than for the minister to neglect the usual and daily Sacrifice of the Church, by which all people, whether they be there or no, reap so much benefit. And this was the opinion of my lord and master, Dr. Overall."[2]

Bishop Cosin continues:

"In the Primitive Church it is most plain, both by the canons of the old Councils [Can. Apos., x.], and by the writings of the ancient Fathers, that *some part of the people at least* never failed to communicate with the priest."[3]

"Some part of the people at least," observes the writer. He does not affirm that every one present received.

10. In their Criticisms upon the Prayer-book at the time of the Savoy Conference (1661) the Puritans took exactly the opposite line from that of their predecessors in the reign of Elizabeth. Whereas in the earlier period Cartwright's ideal was that they who withdrew from Communion should be by civil punishment brought to communicate, his successors now objected to the regulation that every parishioner should communicate at least three times a year; urging:

"For as much as every parishioner is not duly qualified for

[1] Cosin's "Works," vol. v. p. 98.
[2] Additional Notes to Nichols on Common Prayer.
[3] Cosin's "Works," vol. v. p. 127.

the Lord's Supper, and those habitually prepared are at all times actually disposed, but many may be hindered by the providence of God, and some by the distemper of their own spirits, we desire that this rubric may be either wholly omitted, or thus altered: Every minister shall be bound to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at least thrice a year, provided there be a due number of communicants manifesting their desires to receive." [1]

To this the Bishops replied, defending the regulation:

"The distempers which indispose men to it must be corrected, not the receiving of the Sacrament therefore omitted. Formerly our Church was quarrelled at for not compelling men to the Communion; now for urging men. How should she please?" [2]

11. In the Revision of 1661, the warning passage in the Exhortation of 1552 was erased.[3] For the English Church of to-day it possesses an antiquarian interest, but no authority. It is no longer among the directions of the Church.

[1] Cardwell, "History of Conferences," p. 322.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 354.

[3] See an Introduction to the History of the Successive Revisions, 1877, p. 203.

CHAPTER X

THE PRAYER-BOOK AND THE EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE

THE question must now be asked, What does the English Church maintain about the Eucharist as an Offering? The answer must be sought in its official and devotional utterances. The prayer of Oblation in the Communion Service directed to the Heavenly Father is, "We Thy humble servants entirely desire Thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving." The question is, What sort of sacrifice is here intended? Most expositions of the Prayer-book leave this question unanswered. They tell us, indeed, that the prayer in which they occur is now placed in a position corresponding to nothing in any ancient Liturgy in the world; that it was transferred to that position in 1552; that it appeared for the first time in 1549; but what the passage before us means, that we are not informed. And yet the information would be valuable, and the subject well worth some critical mind's considering.

In Bishop Cosin's Notes on the Prayer-book the following account is given of the altered place of this prayer of oblation:

"In King Edward's first Service Book, this prayer was set before the delivery of the Sacrament to the people, and followed immediately after the consecration; and certainly it was the better and the more natural order of the two; neither do I know whether it were the printer's negligence or no thus to displace it. For the consecration of the Sacrament being ever the first, it was always the use in all liturgies to have the oblation follow (which is this) and then the participation, which goes before, and after all the thanksgiving, which is here set next before the Gloria in Excelsis; in regard whereof I have always observed my lord and master, Dr. Overall, to use this oblation in its right place, when he had consecrated the Sacrament to make an offering of it (as being the true public sacrifice of the Church) unto God, that by the merits of Christ's death which was now commemorated, all the Church might receive mercy, etc., as in this prayer; and when that was done, he did communicate the people, and so end with the thanksgiving following hereafter. If men would consider the nature of this Sacrament, how it is the Christian's sacrifice also, they could not choose but use it so too; for as it stands here it is out of his place. *We ought first to send up Christ unto God, and then He will send Him down unto us.*" [1]

The construction often popularly put upon the words, "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving," is that they denote an offering which consists of praise and thanksgiving; that the reference is simply to the frame of mind of the Christian worshipper, and that it has nothing to do with any external offering, or, indeed, with anything whatsoever, except thanksgiving and praise.

[1] Bp. Cosin's Notes on P. B., "Works," vol. v. 115.

This popular interpretation is surely entirely mistaken. For the words in question are a well-known Old Testament phrase. They occur, for instance, in the hundred and sixteenth Psalm: "I will offer unto Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving." With these words compare another sentence in the fourth Psalm: "Offer the sacrifice of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord."

Now, the command to offer the sacrifice of righteousness did not mean that an inward offering was henceforth to replace the outward offerings hitherto ordained. There was not the slightest intention of changing the traditional kind of offering into something else.[1] What was intended was to warn the worshipper that no offering could find acceptance with God unless accompanied by the sincerity of the offerer. The sacrifice of righteousness is contrasted with the sacrifice of unreality. That is to say, in either case, the external offering is just the same: it is the spirit of the worshipper which makes the difference. What God required was that the traditional offering should be presented in a righteous spirit. This is still more plainly taught in the closing verse of the fifty-first Psalm, where the writer, after emphasizing the necessity of being inwardly sincere, that the sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit, concludes with the assertion, "Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness." But that he still understood that this sacrifice would take the usual form of material oblation is

[1] See Delitzsch on the Psalm.

certain, for he adds, "with the burnt offerings and oblations: then shall they offer young bullocks upon Thine altar."

Thus the sacrifice of righteousness does not signify an offering consisting of righteousness, but an offering prompted and pervaded by righteousness. This will help us to understand the other expression: "I will offer unto Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving." The phrase, "sacrifice of thanksgiving," is a technical phrase descriptive of a whole class of the ritual devotion of Israel.

In the seventh chapter of the Book Leviticus, a description is given of external and material sacrifices usual in the ritual of Israel, after which the legislator proceeds to say,[1] "If he shall offer it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes . . . and unleavened wafers." That is to say, as the directions clearly show, the sacrifice of thanksgiving consisted in a definite external sacrifice upon the altar. It was denoted a sacrifice of thanksgiving because it was prompted by a spirit of thanksgiving: not because thanksgiving was substituted for any other offering. There was not the remotest idea that the sacrifice was to consist of thanksgiving.

It seems therefore to follow, of necessity, that when this phrase was borrowed from the Scriptures and transferred to the service of the Church, it did not lose its meaning, which is, an offering accompanied by thanksgiving. It could not, at any rate

[1] Verse 12.

be utilized to express exactly the opposite to what it meant before. It could not suddenly denote an offering consisting in thanksgiving.

Accordingly, the conclusion is that in the Eucharistic Service these words asking the Father mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, refer to an Offering which we set before the Father in the spirit of praise and thanksgiving.

We want to be precise, to avoid all vagueness as far as we possibly can. We must therefore ask, what the Offering is which is set before God in the Eucharist with praise and thanksgiving. Now, plainly, the Offering must be Jesus Christ. For the prayer itself goes on: "most humbly beseeching Thee to grant, that by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His Blood, we and all Thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His Passion." This should remind us of the question in the Catechism: "Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?" To which the answer is: "For the continual remembrance of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby."

Now, it is very noteworthy that in these words the primary purpose of the Institution of the Eucharist is not said to be reception of the Body and Blood of Christ, but the continual remembrance of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ. That is to say, it is the Divinely ordained method for pleading Christ's Death. There is in this official answer of the English Church

a proportion and a balance often lacking in the Eucharistic teaching of some of its individual ministers.

The meaning of this passage in the Church Catechism is admirably described in Dr. A. W. Robinson's book, "The Church Catechism Explained." [1]

"The purpose of the Remembrance may be said to be threefold:

"(1) To present before God the one Sacrifice once offered, as the one and only ground upon which we rest our hopes of salvation. . . .

"(2) To keep before the minds of those who make it the great fact of the Death of Christ, and all that results from it.

"(3) To testify before all to the reality of the Redemption. As the Passover was the continual witness to the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, so the celebration of the Eucharist is the continual witness to the fact of the Redemption of mankind."

This exposition may be still further simplified. For it is reducible to the statement that the Eucharist is a remembrance before man and a remembrance before God. And of these the former is a preparation for the latter. For as the same writer observes: "In our Office of Holy Communion the acts and words of the 'perpetual memory' enjoined by Christ form part of a prayer addressed to God." The very words, "Do this in remembrance of Me," are, in our Liturgy, not addressed to man, but to the Father. God Himself is reminded of Christ's Institution, and that in Christ's

[1] Page 148.

own words. The words, originally addressed to the Apostles, are in our use of them converted into a prayer to the Father. This is our continual remembrance before God of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ.

Combining them together, the words of the Catechism with the words of the Eucharistic Prayer, the former says the Eucharist was instituted "for the continual remembrance of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ"; the latter beseeches God mercifully to accept "this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving." The former words give the doctrine in theory, the latter the doctrine in practice. When the English Church advances from theory to practice, it calls the "remembrance of the Sacrifice" itself a Sacrifice; it asks God to accept this Sacrifice, accompanied by, pervaded by, our praise and thanksgiving.

That leads us to the question what, in the opinion of the English Church, that Sacrifice is.

Here unhappily the English Prayer-book leaves us without explicit guidance. It does not clearly say, in so many words, that the Eucharistic Offering is an Offering of Christ. Its very language about the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving has proved practically evasive and misleading. It has been patient of an interpretation which evaporates the Offering of all objective reality, and fails entirely to connect it with the Presence of Christ. It has been too commonly taken to denote a mere representation of a remote historical incident, rather than a living embodiment of an eternal reality.

The loss in all this is, of course, tremendous. But it was not designed. For the language of the Prayer and the Catechism taken together imply, although they do not assert, that the Offering pleaded before the Father is the Offering of Christ; and the sacramental teaching affirms a union of the sign with the thing signified, the two parts, the outward and the inward, the earthly and the heavenly. And this, taken together with all that goes before, justifies the statement that the Offering is the Offering of Christ Himself. At the same time, it must be frankly confessed that the conclusion is reached by a series of inferences, and is a conclusion which many a man has failed to reach from the words of the English Book of Prayer alone, apart from the mind of the Universal Church. Nevertheless, the English Church's fundamental principle of appeal to the Universal Church means assent to the universal conceptions of Eucharistic Offering. It is in the light of these that her comprehensive, and at times indefinite, statements must be understood and completed.

CHAPTER XI

THE ANGLICAN WRITERS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The Test Act of 1673 required all persons holding civil or military office to receive the Holy Communion from the clergy of the Church of England. Thus all sorts of people qualified for office by occasional conformity, that is, by reception of the Holy Communion once a year. This scandalous practice, condemned indeed by De Foe as "playing bo-peep with God Almighty," and by the poet Cowper as "making the symbols of atoning grace an office-key, a picklock to a place," shows how low the public estimate of the Eucharist could descend. Certainly those who consented to reception of the Eucharist as a test for admission to secular office would be less likely to appreciate the reasons why a conscientious person should desire to be present without receiving.

The question of the lawfulness of presence at the Eucharist without reception could only be for the English Church of the eighteenth century an historical and antiquarian inquiry. It could not, under existing circumstances, enter into the sphere of problems of

practical interest. It was, however, discussed from the historical point of view by two eminent and learned writers.

1. The first of these was Joseph Bingham, who died in 1722. In his "Origines Ecclesiasticæ, or Antiquities of the Christian Church," Bingham says, referring to the customary dismissal of catechumens and penitents in the Eucharistic Service:

"It is evident that the most ancient and primitive *custom* was for all that were allowed to stay and communicate in prayer, to communicate in the participation of the Eucharist also, except only the last class of penitents, who were admitted to hear the prayers, but not to make their Oblation, nor receive the Communion; whence they had the name of Consistentes, Co-standers, because they might stay to communicate in the prayers, but still δίχα προσφορᾶς, without the Oblation, as the ancient canons word it. These only excepted, all other baptized persons were *not only permitted, but*, by the rules of the Church, *obliged* to communicate, under pain of ecclesiastical censure."

Bingham then quotes the Canons Apostolical and Antiochene, etc. After which he continues:

"In St. Chrysostom's time, some began to desire they might have liberty to stay during the performance of the whole Office, and yet not be obliged to communicate. They were not willing to be accounted penitents and be driven out with them; and yet *they would not be communicants* and *orderly partake* with the Church. Against these St. Chrysostom inveighs, after his usual manner, with a great deal of eloquence and becoming sharpness."[1]

[1] Bingham, "Origines," p. 152.

Bingham then quotes the famous passage Chrysostom, Hom. iii., in "Ephes." He then adds:

"But, in the very next age, this discipline was a little relaxed, and men who would not communicate were not only permitted but enjoined to stay during the whole Service, till after the Lord's Prayer and the Bishop's Benediction; which . . . was not till the whole Consecration was ended, immediately before the act of partaking; at which time this sort of non-communicants were dismissed with a solemn Prayer called the Benediction. . . ."

Bingham then quotes the Canons of Agde and Orleans, adding his conclusion as follows:

"So that what, in Chrysostom's time, was reckoned a crime, was presently after accounted a piece of devotion, for the people to stay and hear the whole solemnity of the Service to the time of communicating, and then they might depart without partaking of the Communion; which was plainly a relaxation of the ancient discipline, and a deviation from the primitive practice."[1]

If we attempt to summarize Bingham's theory concisely, it may be observed that he divides the history into three periods:

(1) The first period, in which the faithful were invariably "not only permitted, but obliged to communicate" whenever present, and this injunction was apparently invariably obeyed. (Centuries 1 to 3.)

(2) The second period, in which the injunction still existed and was upheld, but was to some extent disobeyed. (Century 4.)

[1] Bingham, "Origines," p. 154.

(3) The third period, in which the injunction had disappeared and the contrary practice was "not only permitted, but enjoined." (Century 5.)

Upon this theory the following criticisms are offered: The assertion that during the first three centuries all the faithful were obliged to communicate whenever present, is contradicted by Waterland, who remarks upon the passage in St. Clement, "There was as yet [in A.D. 200] no standing rule or Canon of the Church obliging all the faithful to receive as often as they met for Divine Service."[1] Scudamore owns that if there were such a rule, it was not observed at Alexandria, though it is not explained how Alexandria held itself exempt from one of the rules of the Church applicable to "all baptized persons."

Bingham ascribes the beginning of change to the self-will of certain persons in the fourth century, who desired liberty to remain without obligation to receive, a liberty first claimed at Antioch, and rebuked by St. Chrysostom: "they would not be communicant and orderly partake."

Yet surely four centuries cannot have passed across Church life without the question forcing itself on serious minds what to do when anxious to comply with the practice of remaining, yet unequal (for adequate reasons, such as the Canon of Antioch afterwards recognized) to communicate.

The communicants of the Church could not be

[1] Waterland, "Doctrine of the Eucharist," p. 373, quoted *supra*.

drilled with such precision, remembering the awful nature of that before which they assembled. Motives of deepest reverence may, at times, have prompted the desire to remain and yet not receive.

Besides all this, when Bingham comes to the third period into which his summary is divided, he describes the Church as suddenly revising its discipline, so that whereas for four centuries the faithful were "not only permitted, but obliged to communicate," they were now "not only permitted, but enjoined to stay" without reception. So that, as Bingham expresses it, "what in Chrysostom's day was reckoned a crime was after accounted a piece of devotion." No words could express better than Bingham's own the paradoxical character of the conclusion.

2. The second eighteenth-century writer on the subject is Waterland, in his treatise on the Eucharist.

Waterland's very careful study of the obligation to frequent Communion begins with a serious recognition of the awful responsibility of reception. Historically he saw that in the time of St. Clement of Alexandria:

> "There was yet no standing rule or Canon of the Church obliging all the faithful to receive as often as they met for Divine Service; but Christians were left at liberty to judge how far they were fitly qualified in knowledge or godly living; only it was supposed that they ought to be fitly qualified, and, if they were, to receive."[1]

[1] Waterland, "Doctrine of the Eucharist," p. 373.

And Waterland held, as we have already seen, that the canons enforcing reception are probably related to local circumstances, and "did not affect the main body of the faithful . . . who might be still left to the same discretionary conscientious belief as before."[1] Waterland considered that:

"It is not likely that they were ever intended to oblige all the faithful to communicate as often as they came to Divine Service, or to abridge them of the reasonable liberty of judging how far they were prepared for it, and whether they might not sometimes (provided it were not customary, so as to amount to contempt) abstain from it."[2]

Waterland further held that the language of St. Chrysostom requires to be qualified by his own principles.[3]

"He does not mean that prayer in general requires the same preparation that the Communion does, or that every one who may properly be admitted to the former may as properly be admitted to the latter also. No; that would run directly counter to the known principles and practice, and standing discipline of the Church in that age; for nothing was more usual than to admit penitents of the fourth order to communion in prayers for two, three, four, or sometimes five years, and all the while to debar them from the Holy Communion, as not yet worthy to be admitted to it."[4]

Waterland, indeed, supposed that the fourth order

[1] Waterland, "Doctrine of the Eucharist," p. 377.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 378. [3] *Ibid.* p. 380. [4] *Ibid.* p. 381.

of penitents was only allowed to be present in the prayers prior to the Oblation, and not during "the mystical prayers belonging to the Communion." He accordingly supposed that when the deacon warned all non-communicants to withdraw,

> "the Co-standers must, of course, have been reckoned of that number, being forbidden to communicate; and therefore they must have been obliged to withdraw after the preparatory prayers, and before the Communion, properly speaking, began."[1]

But this is, of course, a mere surmise, for which no evidence is offered. And, as we have already seen, this theory is rejected by many leading writers on the Canons, and is, indeed, in conflict with the evidence. But, however this may be, Waterland tells us that his chief purpose in discussing St. Chrysostom's exhortation was to refute the objection sometimes urged in the name of Chrysostom, that every one who may be admitted to prayers ought to be admitted to Communion also.

"Chrysostom never said, or most certainly never meant, any such thing: so that his authority ought to be out of the question."[2]

Waterland's critical investigation of the early evidence is most remarkable for its careful balance and fairness. But his judgment on non-communicating presence was naturally influenced by his view of the

[1] Waterland, "Doctrine of the Eucharist," p. 382.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 384.

"Sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist." He was bound, in deference to primitive use, to recognize that the Eucharist is in some sense a Sacrifice. But he definitely declared the sacrifice to be a Sacrifice of Christians, and not a Sacrifice of Christ.

"What we give to God is our own service, and ourselves, which is our sacrifice; but the archetypal Sacrifice itself is what no one but Christ Himself could offer, whether really or symbolically. We represent it: we do not offer it in the Eucharist; but it is there sacramentally or symbolically to us exhibited or applied." [1]

On these principles the basis of non-communicating attendance, as founded in the Offering of Christ to the Father, would certainly be destroyed. On the other hand, Waterland says elsewhere that in the Eucharist "there is also a presenting of the elements to God for consecration"; there is "the offering to view, viz. of God, angels, and men, under certain symbols, the death, Passion, or Sacrifice of Christ"; there is "the offering, as it were, to Divine consideration, with our praises and thanksgivings, Christ and His Sacrifice, pleading the merit of it, in behalf of ourselves and others." [2] If the Eucharist is all this, if it is "offering to Divine consideration Christ and His Sacrifice," then the previous statement, that "the archetypal Sacrifice itself is what no one but Christ Himself could offer, whether really or symbolically," becomes very greatly

[1] Waterland, "Doctrine of the Eucharist," p. 335.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 482.

modified, and a view of the Sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist is opened out which would make the non-communicating pleading of the same perfectly legitimate. But Waterland was unable to do real justice to the ancient conception of the Offering.

CHAPTER XII

THE TRACTARIAN MOVEMENT

During the lengthy period in which celebrations of the Holy Eucharist were comparatively infrequent in the English Church, the question of non-communicating attendance was hardly likely to arise. The removal in 1662 from the Exhortation of the passage which has often been supposed to forbid it did not neutralize the Puritan influence by which the practice was unquestionably discouraged. The habit of withdrawal had been created; and the fact that the existence of a prohibition was now no longer even arguable did not change the habit. Nor did the Tractarian Movement itself at first produce a change. This was natural. The Oxford Revival was primarily concerned with principles, with fundamental doctrines. The Eucharist itself had first to be reinstated as the constant and at least weekly expression of Christian devotion. But just in proportion as that restoration was secured, the practical problems which have constantly accompanied the incessant reiteration of the Eucharist inevitably reappeared. From 1850 the subject of non-communicating attendance became once again a matter of

discussion. Much of the early Tractarian discussion was tentative and uncertain. The subject evidently came upon them as something new. There was a long tradition of Eucharistic non-observance which blocked the way to a right consideration. There was comparatively little in the Anglican writers to guide the student in the practice of the Universal Church. The summary treatment of the question by Bingham and Mosheim and Waterland was almost all that lay before the English mind as easily accessible.

1. Keble's view of non-communicating attendance was elicited in reply to one who sought for guidance. It was expressed with all the caution natural to one who keenly felt the dangers incident to the presence of a mixed multitude, and was greatly discontent with the existing conditions in Roman worship.

"I cannot deny that I have a strong feeling against the foreign custom of encouraging *all sorts of persons* to 'assist' at the Holy Eucharist, without communicating. It seems to me open to two grave objections: it cannot be without danger of profaneness and irreverence to very many, and of consequent dishonour to the Holy Sacrament; and it has brought in and encouraged, or both (at least, so I greatly suspect), a notion of a quasi-sacramental virtue in such attendance, which I take to be great part of the error stigmatized in our 31st Article. Even in such a good book as the 'Imitatio Christi' and still more in the 'Paradisus Animæ,' one finds participating 'In Missa *vel* Communione' spoken of as if one brought a spiritual benefit of the same order as the other. This I believe to be utterly unauthorized by Scripture and antiquity; and I can

imagine it of very dangerous consequence. But whatever one thought of this, the former objection would still stand, and it would not do to answer that the Early Church allowed, or even encouraged, the practice, because, even if that were granted (I very much doubt it, to say the least), the existence of discipline at that time entirely alters the case.

"Yet, of course, I cannot deny that there may be any number of cases in which attendance without communicating may be morally and spiritually (I could not say sacramentally) beneficial; and in default of discipline, I should advise any person who thought that such was his own case to consult with his spiritual adviser, and act accordingly; the clergy of the particular Church not objecting."[1]

This cautious and tentative letter evidently speaks of a period when the resuscitation of a practice long since disused is being approached, and, with large reserves, appreciated. But it is curious to notice that the sacrificial aspect and its implications are by no means brought forward, as a more primitive and a more recent period alike would certainly have done. We find that stress was laid on what was termed "spiritual Communion" as contrasted with actual reception, rather than on the sacrificial as contrasted with sacramental use. Thus elsewhere Keble observes:

"Of course, spiritual Communion cannot be like real sacramental Communion, though none can tell how great a blessing may attend it, properly used; and it has no *promise* that I know of to distinguish it from other prayers; but the Church recommends it; Bishop Wilson,

[1] Keble's "Letters of Spiritual Counsel," p. 231.

and I believe Bishop Taylor, and the 'Paradisus Animæ' exemplify it. I should think it might be considered as in a certain way united to one's latest Communion, as a continuation of the devotions then offered, and so peculiar comfort and help may very well be hoped for from it. Or you may connect it prospectively with your intended *next* Communion as part of your preparation." [1]

2. Stephen's notes, historical and legal, on the Book of Common Prayer were published in 1850. The learned lawyer, criticizing the opinion that non-communicants ought to retire immediately after the priest has placed the alms upon the altar, observes:

"There is no authority in the Book of Common Prayer for this assertion. Non-communicants, if they think proper, have a legal right to remain during the entire administration of the Holy Sacrament, and it is a practice which should be encouraged, and not, as it unfortunately is, discouraged by the clergy." [2]

"In 1662 all restrictions in the Book of Common Prayer respecting the presence of non-communicants were removed; and neither the churchwardens nor any other persons have a legal right to remove non-communicants from the church during the administration of the Holy Sacrament." [3]

3. One of the first in recent times to advocate the presence of non-communicants at the Eucharist in the English Church was Robert Isaac Wilberforce, in 1853.

[1] Keble's "Letters of Spiritual Counsel," p. 184.

[2] A. J. Stephens on the "Book of Common Prayer," 1850, vol. ii. p 1173.

[3] Stephens, *ibid.* ii. 1185.

He founded the claim on the doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and while acknowledging that perfect participation in the Eucharist implies that men should avail themselves of both its purposes, the feast as well as the offering, he urged that there was nothing contrary either to natural piety or to an express command, in joining in the Sacrifice without going on to the Sacrament, or in partaking of the Sacrament without having been present at its oblation. The truth of the latter statement is clear from the primitive practice of reservation for those debarred from attendance at the Sacrifice.

"Neither does there seem any reason in the nature of the case why those who are hindered from obtaining the full benefits which the Church has to offer, shall be prohibited from their partial enjoyment." [1]

Such partial use, he contended, is neither forbidden by the laws of the Church, nor at variance with the nature of Christian Sacraments.

Wilberforce was one of the first to criticize the historical theories of Bingham, by whose decisions on the point he considered that Churchmen had been unduly influenced. The actual practice of East and West through the larger portion of the Church's existence possessed for Wilberforce a significance and an authority disowned by Bingham. From the eighth century onward Wilberforce saw,

[1] Wilberforce, "The Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist," p. 449.

"first, that the Holy Eucharist was attended, or was meant to be attended, by the mass of the laity, weekly at least, if not more frequently; secondly, that they were expected to remain till the end of the Service; thirdly, that frequent reception was thought desirable, but that they were not *required* to communicate except on special occasions."[1] Wilberforce held that "Chrysostom's words were not intended to exclude men from the Sacrifice, but to bring them to the Sacrament."[2] He claimed that "those who now forbid the practice ought to show it to be unlawful."[3] He said that "the greatest benefit which, according to ancient writers, is attained by individuals through participation in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, is the acceptableness which it confers upon their prayers. Not only are their emotions more intense, but their petitions are more efficacious."[4] As Chrysostom himself had put it: "then the occasion aids their petitions, and the offering gives them help." And, further, Wilberforce reminded his readers that "It was the exclusion of the mass of men from the Christian Sacrifice, which made it necessary to substitute other Offices, by which the Daily Eucharist has been practically superseded. Now, no circumstance has had more influence than this upon the belief of the people."[5]

4. A vigorous, earnest, and somewhat caustic Tract appeared in 1854 on "The right of all the Baptized to be present at the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist." The writer complained bitterly that,

"as things are now, it is the Great Liturgy which is

[1] Wilberforce, "The Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist," p. 454.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 460.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 477.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 478.
[5] *Ibid.* p. 479.

least honoured and frequented. It has lost its ancient pre-eminence and dignity. It has become an unnecessary appendage in the eyes of the mass of British Christians, rather than the very essence of a full Service. And thus the white-robed quire often leave the Gloria in Excelsis and the Sanctus to be sung by the angelic host alone. This is surely a manifest evidence of our disagreement with the ancient standards. A mere Office would not have had more charms for a Primitive Christian than the Great Liturgy." [1]

"No ancient Liturgy that I know of," said the writer, "contemplated the departure of the baptized, except they be excommunicate, till the Service is completed. The Mozarabic and other Liturgies indeed allow non-communicants to retire, but it is *only after the consecration*, when the Sacrifice has been offered, and the Bishop gives a special benediction to those who withdraw before the giving of the Sacrament." [2] The writer expressed his opinion that there seemed to him more religion in remaining without receiving than in walking out of church after the sermon. [3] He maintained that "the Church of England has never by any *rubric* dismissed the faithful who did not remain for the purpose of receiving." [4]

This pamphlet, on the right of all the baptized, is the work of an advocate rather than of an historian. It contains too many statements which will not bear historical investigation. It greatly angered many contemporaries by describing the 1552 book as "that spawn of Calvinistic theology." [5] But it testifies to

[1] "The Right of all the Baptized, etc.," p. 10.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 14.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 17.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 18.
[5] *Ibid.* p. 21.

the strongly rising sense of the failure of the Anglican past to place the Eucharist in its right position.

5. Two years after Wilberforce's plea came Scudamore's "Communion of the Laity," by way of reply to all the last three writers. Here the opposite view was advocated with great learning and zeal. Scudamore's Essay awakened the strong disapproval of John Mason Neale, who replied in the *Christian Remembrancer* of 1858.[1] Dr. Neale maintained that

> "it is utterly impossible, even in primitive times, that early Christians could have received daily. If, therefore, daily Communion were the use, either the attendance of the faithful at the Divine Service must have been irregular and less frequent, or non-communicants must have remained through the whole."[2]

On the other hand, he argued also that

> "granting that, at the very beginning, every one who could attend Divine Worship at all was present at the Holy Eucharist, and every one present received, what consequence can be drawn from those great and wonderful ages as regards our own? While the Church had not yet embraced the world, while the Israelites pitched before them like two little flocks of kids, but the Syrians filled the country, while the life of every Christian was held by so doubtful a tenure as the will of the magistrate in calling him to sacrifice, what amount of holiness and devotion might not reasonably be expected? . . . For those who were desirous of acting up to the primitive life, the Early Church soon made provision in her monasteries;

[1] Vol. xxxv. pp. 1–37.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 19.

for the rest, she was compelled, through no fault of her own, but through a changed order of things and an extended sphere of usefulness, to relax her discipline." [1]

Neale argued again that, in the primitive period, the Communion of Infants prevailed, and

"that a child so communicated did not receive again till it had arrived at years in which it could understand somewhat of the nature of the Sacrament, say, seven, eight, or nine, as the case might be; and that from thenceforth it was equally a Communicant with any other member of the congregation. Is it not a fact that this practice has remained unchanged in the East till the present day, though the age of recommencing Communion may be somewhat later?" [2]

Neale's conclusion from his survey of the facts is:

"On the whole, then, we think that the more the subject is examined, the more it will appear:

"1. That even in the most primitive times, it was very usual for non-communicants to remain during the whole of the celebration.

"2. That naturally, when first love began to cool, and first fervour to abate, the great Doctors of the Church spoke in the strongest terms against the habit of remaining without communicating; meaning thereby, not to condemn remaining as against departing, but merely to censure remaining without Communion as against remaining for Communion.

"3. That other passages condemn the being present during the celebration and then departing, not simply, nor

[1] *Christian Remembrancer*, vol. xxxv. p. 22.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 23.

absolutely, but with the notion of contempt of the Blessed Sacrament, or riotous or unruly behaviour, neither of which questions enter into our present subject." [1]

"Again," said Neale, "If the Communion cannot be separated from the Sacrifice, how could the reservation of the Holy Mysteries have been, as we know it was, a primitive practice?" [2] Here he agreed with Wilberforce.

6. Dr. Mill, in his well-known letters on "The presence of non-communicants at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, how far a Catholic practice," while objecting to giving, under existing circumstances, a definite invitation to people to remain as non-communicants, at the same time held that

"As the bloodless offering of our praise and thanksgiving in union with the prescribed memorials of the Sacrifice that procures their acceptance, was ever thought by the Church to be beneficial to others beside the offerers and participators, whether absent or present, I would not conceive those persons to be excluded from its benefit whose presence is intended to express their sympathy with the act; who feel strongly that it is better to be with the communicants than with those who turn their back upon them, while prevented from any cause satisfactory to their own conscience, and not offensive to others, from participating with the reverence they feel due to the Body and Blood of the Lord. I cannot but think they are included, if they are duly sensible of the great blessing and privilege of actual Communion, and are not in any way seeking excuses for standing aloof from it; and (I would add) if they are not seeking new and unauthorized modes

[1] *Christian Remembrancer*, vol. xxxv. p. 24.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 26.

of approaching the Divine Majesty; seeking through a *sight* of the elements what is only promised to the *manducation* of them." [1]

7. One of the ablest defences of the practice at this period was the pamphlet on the Anglican authority for the presence of non-communicants during Holy Communion. The author was the Rev. T. W. Perry, and the Essay appeared originally in a paper called *The Ecclesiologist.* [2]

Perry confined attention to the Anglican authority. He argued that the intention of the Reformers is shown in the first Act of the reign of Edward VI. (1547), which is entitled, "An Act against such as shall unreverently speak against the Sacrament of the Altar and of the receiving thereof under both kinds." This Act affirms that

"It is more agreeable to the first institution of Christ, and to the usage of the Apostles and the primitive Church, that the people being present should receive the said Blessed Sacrament with the Priest, than that the Priest should receive it alone, therefore the Priest which shall minister the same, shall, at least one day before, exhort all persons which shall be present, likewise to resort and prepare themselves to receive the same. And when the day prefixed cometh, after a godly exhortation by the minister (wherein shall be further expressed the benefit and comfort promised to them which worthily receive the said Holy Sacrament, and danger and indignation of God threatened to them which shall presume to receive the same

[1] "Tracts on Catholic Unity," Number 7, p. 4.

[2] June, 1858.

unworthily, to the end that every man may try and examine his own conscience before he shall receive the same) the said minister shall not without a lawful cause deny the same to any person that will devoutly and humbly desire it; any law, statute, ordinance, or custom contrary thereunto in any wise notwithstanding; not condemning hereby the usage of any Church out of the King's Majesty's Dominions."

On this Statute the writer observes that

"It seemed to have been considered that . . . the doctrine of concomitance, the practice of private Masses, and *compulsory* confession, were bars to more frequent Communion, not less than contradictions of the teaching of the Early Church; and so this statute (though only condemning as *unapostolic and unprimitive* the English rule; and confessedly avoiding any judgment on the practice of the Church elsewhere) sought to afford that *liberty* to English Churchmen which, it was supposed, would draw them towards more frequent and regular reception of the Sacrament of the Altar."

The author proceeds to show that Scudamore's perplexity about the departure of non-communicants out of the *choir* probably arose from his not knowing how the people came to be in the choir. Accordingly, he explains that the Injunction of Edward VI. ordered the people to come up into the choir to present their offerings. He also quotes the evidence from Bishops Ridley and Hooper recognizing the presence of non-communicants. The latter especially observing that

"the Communion ought not to be kept or celebrated within

the Church unless that the whole congregation (or at least a good part of the same) do receive it." [1]

Perry argues that while we have

"the strongest possible evidence that Cranmer was determined to insist upon the abolition of all celebrations in which the Priest alone purposed to communicate," there is not "the least indication that he thought it wrong for non-communicants to remain when others were communicating." "We may be tolerably confident that such an idea was not likely to suggest itself to the Archbishop." [2]

Perry further quotes the penultimate Rubric of the Communion Service of 1549.

"Furthermore, every man and woman to be bound to hear and be at the Divine Service in the Parish Church where they be resident, and there with devout prayer or godly silence and meditation to occupy themselves. There to pay their duties, to communicate once in the year at least, and there to receive and take all other Sacraments and Rites, in this book appointed."

"Now," observes Perry, "(without discussing the question whether the Divine Service was not at that time used as a technical term for the Holy Communion) it is most observable that this direction is one of eight, all relating to the Communion Office and appended to it."

With regard to the warning passage in the Exhortation of 1551, Perry contended that it was not designed to change the law of the Church; that it was solely

[1] Later Writings of Bishop Hooper. Parker Society.
[2] Perry, "Anglican Authority, etc.," p. 9.

directed against habitual non-communicants, curious and idle spectators, with no sense of the sacredness of the Service, without endeavour to frame their lives to fit themselves for reception, and thus having the mysteries of Christ in derision; that it had no relation to habitual communicants who, whether from a desire to comply with some discipline of the Church, such as fasting, or from a sense of inadequate preparation, refrained from receiving; and that it must be construed in conformity with other rubrics and exhortations, especially with that which bade the intending communicants make their humble confession "before this congregation here gathered together in His Holy Name."[1]

Perry argued from the fact that, at the time of the Elizabethan Revision, the proposal in Convocation,

"'that no person abide within the Church during the time of the Communion, unless he do communicate, that is, they should depart immediately after the Exhortation be ended and before the confession of the communicants,' was rejected: 'that the ecclesiastical legislation of England did not consider it needful to interfere.' Moreover, 'there is the important fact to be noticed . . . that while the whole congregation is meant to be, and is present, at the *commencement* of the Service, and certainly at the *Nicene Creed*, for after this all the *public notices* are to be given, there is not the very slightest hint that *any one* is *bound* to leave before the conclusion of the ministration."[2]

Perry's conclusion is that the Revisers of 1662

[1] Perry, "Anglican Authority, etc.," p. 15. [2] *Ibid.* p. 20.

"purposely so rearranged these parts of the Communion Office as neither to appear to drive away the well-disposed and good-intentioned, nor to seem to encourage the attendance of the ill-affected or evil-minded communicants. They did not wish, we believe, to tighten the traditional rule of the English Church."[1]

8. To these advocates must be added the testimony of George Rundle Prynne, given in 1865.

"It is sometimes said that to encourage such a practice (*as non-communicating attendance*) is to lead people to substitute attendance at the Sacrifice for Communion. This theory has surely been sufficiently tested during the last two or three hundred years. Christian people have been, practically, driven out of Church at the commencement of the chief and only divinely appointed act of Christian worship. But has this practice had the effect of leading our people to set a true value on the Holy Eucharist, and to become communicants? Non-communicating England is the reply. Not one in a hundred, probably, of our people are communicants. Nay, further, the great mass even of church-goers simply ignore the one distinctive act of Christian worship altogether, and satisfy their consciences by attending at Matins and Evensong, and listening to sermons. What they have never seen or joined in, they have learned to forget.

"It is believed by an increasing number of English Churchmen that a different and a better result may be obtained by returning to a more Catholic practice; and that, if our people can be led to remain and worship their Incarnate Saviour in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, they will not long rest until they have also feasted upon

[1] Perry, "Anglican Authority, etc.," p. 20.

their Sacrifice, and tasted and seen how gracious their Lord is." [1]

The whole tone of this extract is very characteristic of a period and a school. It is not written from the standpoint of the professed theologian, but of the parish priest, confronted with the practical problems of devotion, thoroughly conscious of the miserable failure of past methods, sure that nothing can be worse, and anxious to revert to methods which, at any rate, have behind them the concurrent sanction of East and West for many centuries of the Church's existence.

The extract forms part of the preface to the "Eucharistic Manual," first published in 1865.[2]

9. In the Royal Commission on Ritual, the Earl of Harrowby gave notice (June 19, 1868) of his intention to move the following new Rubric:

"A sufficient interval shall be allowed to enable such of the congregation to withdraw as do not intend to communicate." [3]

This proposal was actually moved by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, and seconded by Lord Harrowby, and carried by thirteen votes against ten (July 9, 1869).[4] An attempt at a later meeting to omit this amendment was defeated by twelve votes against four [5] (February 4, 1870).

[1] "George Rundle Prynne," by A. Clifton Kelway, p. 224.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 223.
[3] "Third Report of Ritual Commission," 1870, p. 83.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 104.
[5] *Ibid.* p. 112.

The same Commission endeavoured to ascertain from leading Nonconformists what was their practice with reference to Holy Communion. In reply, Dr. Stoughton said that

"many ministers invite and encourage people, not communicating themselves, to remain as spectators."[1]

10. We proceed to the action of Convocation on the subject.

This recommendation of the Ritual Commission that sufficient interval should be allowed for the withdrawal of such persons as do not intend to receive was introduced into Convocation in 1872. The proposed change in the Rubric was to run as follows:

"At the time of the celebration of the Holy Communion (*those who so desire having had opportunity to withdraw and*) the communicants being conveniently placed for the receiving of the Holy Sacrament . . ."

etc. So far as the language went this was only a permission to withdraw, and an indication of the precise point of the Service at which the withdrawal should take place. But this proposed alteration was accompanied by a reason. Now the reason given was

"The Committee recommend the acceptance of this addition to the rubrics as indicating the time at which those who are not about to communicate may in an orderly manner withdraw, and at which the minister may by a pause, give them the opportunity of so withdrawing."

[1] "Third Report of Ritual Commission," 1870, p. 140.

Accordingly, High Churchmen in Convocation felt that this permission to withdraw was virtually an effort to exclude the presence of non-communicants. A leading member therefore argued that

"it is quite contrary to the rule of the Church to say that only those who are going to communicate are to stay in the Church, and therefore, while I have no objection to make to the rubric, which would allow any number of persons to stay for the purpose of worship without intending to communicate, I must protest against the reason assigned for it."[1]

This statement naturally drew forth all the opponents of the practice to state their strong conviction that persons who do not intend to receive ought not to be allowed to stay. Their opposition was, however, qualified by the acknowledgment that, "as the law now stands, they are not compelled to retire."[2] At the same time, while protesting that they did not wish to see a compulsory rubric introduced, they yet proposed that the words, "those who so desire having had opportunity to withdraw," should be altered into "those who do not intend to communicate having had opportunity to withdraw." This altered form was still more strongly resented by the High Churchmen. One pleaded that choir-boys should be an exception to the rule. Another, that the poor, not yet able to receive, should also be excepted. A third pleaded for the devout communicant who had already received but who desired "to take

[1] "Chronicle of Convocation," 1872, p. 292.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 293.

advantage of the devotional exercise of a second service." Another, "for those who were being prepared for their first Communion." [1]

"Here," said one, "is an attempt to restrict the Church, or rather to express the mind of the Church against the presence of non-communicants at the administration of the Communion; but if the Church has a mind it had better be expressed plainly."

He accused the opponents of the practice with attempting to introduce by a side wind what they dared not attempt to do openly.

Nevertheless, the amendment was carried in a wretchedly small House, sixteen voting in favour and twelve against.[2]

Thus, in 1872, the Lower House of the Canterbury Convocation declared against non-communicating attendance by a majority of four. This is exactly what Convocation refused to do in 1562. But the scantiness of the majority evidently scandalized the Convocation itself: for when it was next proposed to insert this revised rubric between the Offertory and the Prayer for the Church Militant, it was at once affirmed too that this was "an entirely new question," and "of great importance to be decided in so thin a House." [3] Accordingly, further discussion was postponed.

When the subject was resumed, after two months' interval,[4] the Prolocutor reminded them that "the

[1] "Chronicle of Convocation," 1872, p. 294.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 297, March 2. [3] *Ibid.* [4] *Ibid.* p. 519, May 2.

words were adopted in a small House and by a small majority"; and he "ventured to think that the wiser and better course would be" for them "now to look the question boldly in the face and reconsider their decision."

The truth is that the majority of four, on a question of such importance as the right of the laity to be present at the Eucharist, whether recipients or not, was rousing very strong opinion in the Church at large.

Petitions and memorials against the newly-framed regulation poured in upon Convocation.

11. A memorial was sent from the English Church Union, a society, as the petitioners said, consisting at that time of nine thousand communicants. In this memorial it was represented

"that the proposed insertion of the words, 'those who so desire, having had opportunity, to withdraw,' in the rubric beginning 'at the time of the celebration of the Communion,' is in any case unnecessary and superfluous, as 'those who desire it' are at liberty to withdraw then, or at any other convenient time, without any such rubric; and they trust that Convocation will not sanction any change in the existing rubric which might directly or by implication countenance the notion that it is *obligatory* on any baptized persons who may be present to withdraw from such celebration, unless they intend then to communicate:

"First, because such a notion is wholly unwarranted by any text or word or hint contained in Holy Scripture.

"Secondly, because no such usage ever obtained at any time in any Church, nor can be found recognized in any Liturgy, ancient or modern.

"Thirdly, because the ancient liturgical usage of the

East and West was, previously to the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, to warn only the heathen, unbaptized, catechumens, the excommunicate, and unabsolved penitents to depart; so that it would be a gratuitous insult to the faithful baptized Christian thus to degrade him to their level.

"Fourthly, because such a notion would be contrary to the intentions of the framers of our Communion Office, who, although the same was four times revised, never inserted any such direction therein, which they assuredly would have done had they intended such withdrawal.

"Fifthly, because any direction implying an *obligation* to withdraw would be a novel and restrictive rule, subversive of the present liberties of the faithful laity, and unduly curtailing the same without any reason assigned.

"Sixthly, because, admitting that it has long been the custom for those who do not then intend to communicate to withdraw, it is a dangerous and suicidal error to found our future rule and practice upon the omissions of past years, wherein so large a portion of the population has been lost to the Church.

"Seventhly, because we firmly believe that one main reason for the paucity of communicants, especially among the lower and middle classes, is that they are never present at the celebration of Holy Communion, which in itself is a valuable means of instruction for those who are being prepared to approach the Lord's Table."[1]

12. This document was followed up some two months later by a learned argument of the case for non-communicating attendance, also presented by the English Church Union, as a memorial to Convocation,[2]

[1] *Church Union Gazette*, March 1, 1872, p. 70.
[2] *Ibid.* pp. 118–122.

and bearing the well-known signature of Robert Brett. Great stress was laid in this second document on the fact that the proposed alteration had been carried in the Lower House of the Southern Convocation by a majority of only four, in a meeting "at which no more than 28 of its 146 members were present." It claimed that such a change would be

"a new line of demarcation between the English Church and all the other chief Christian bodies, inasmuch as non-communicating attendance is the acknowledged and familar rule of the whole Church, East and West alike, and is even encouraged by the principal Protestant sects at home and abroad, with a view to the instruction and edification of their members."

It also pointed out, with reference to the clause in the Exhortation about gazers and lookers-on, which was expunged in the last revision, that

"whatever may have been the motive which prompted this change, the legal effect of it is repeal."

It contended, further, that the mind of the English Church was "proved very clearly by comparing two facts in the structure of the Office: (1) the introductory rubric directs notice to be given by intending communicants, who were certainly then, as now, a small minority of the parishioners. (2) But the choice of the Communion Office as the *only one* in which a sermon is provided, or public notices enjoined to be given out, shows that it was assumed that a large congregation would be gathered, even though but a few might intend to communicate; whereas . . . there is no provision made for the departure of any person before the close of the Office with the final blessing."

13. A further petition, laid before Convocation on May 3, stated

"that whereas the Eucharist is a feast upon a sacrifice, and the complete act of Eucharistic Communion consists properly of participation both in oblation and in reception; and whereas the long-continued reaction from the non-receiving practice of the unreformed Church has so obscured the doctrine of Eucharistic Oblation that multitudes of communicants are wholly ignorant thereof, and practically communicate in reception, without consciously communicating in oblation at all: and whereas it is now, for the first time, proposed to recognize formally, by some addition to the rubric, the withdrawal from the oblation of all persons who are indisposed or unable on that occasion to communicate in reception, with the view of prohibiting communion in oblation only: and whereas the prohibition of communion, in either oblation or reception, obscures the importance of, and practically throws a slight upon, oblation or reception respectively; and is an infringement of the liberty of Churchmen, inasmuch as it involves a restriction upon one of the chief means of grace: and whereas a similar infringement of liberty (viz. the denial of the cup to the laity) was in great degree the cause of the non-receiving practice of the unreformed Church, the danger of which is now relied on as a justification of the proposed restriction: and whereas it is especially unwise to obscure and disparage the doctrine of Eucharistic Oblation, just as it is being revived, and when it requires to be carefully cherished in the minds of the ignorant, and distinguished from that perversion of it whereby the laity are made content to assist at the celebration as spectators, without joining in it as communicants: and whereas the true remedy for an undue prominence of either the oblation or

the reception, and for the neglect of Communion in either, consists in the comprehensive recognition of the whole of the Eucharistic doctrine, and in carefully teaching its separate departments, and not in throwing slight upon either: and whereas your petitioners fully admit that such communion in oblation only should be exceptional, and should not be supposed to convey to the participators therein the benefits of reception, nor to be permissible to any but those who habitually communicate in reception, or are intending to do so: and whereas many persons, who habitully communicate in reception, value as a most precious privilege the liberty of occasional communion in oblation only as an act of worship, and ought not to be debarred therefrom:

"Your petitioners humbly pray your reverend House not to introduce an innovation upon the law of the Church by fixing a time in the Office of Holy Communion for the withdrawal of those who are not about to communicate in reception."[1]

This petition was signed, among others, by Berdmore Compton, Benjamin Webb, C. W. Furse, Goldsmith Medd, W. R. Church, Luard, Liddon, and Cowie.

14. The opinion of Canon Bright is interesting from his intimate knowledge of the Age of the Fathers, and his interpretation of the language of St. Chrysostom is particularly valuable.

"What manner of persons were those Antiochene Churchmen whom St. Chrysostom rebuked for their non-communicating attendance? Not only . . . were they in the habit of communicating only thrice a year, and then *pro formâ*, without earnestness and devotion, but they

[1] "Chronicle of Convocation," 1872, p. 578.

carried their devotion into their attendance at the ordinary celebrations. They stood idly gazing at the Service, or, as St. Chrysostom puts it, 'when the King's Table was present and the Angels were ministering at it, and the King Himself was present, they stood gaping'; they were quite indifferent to the fact of their own condition as habitual non-communicants, 'cared nothing about it, thought it nothing,' and thus might be described as virtually 'despising the mysteries' with an 'impudent effrontery,' which was the result of irreligious 'sloth.' Such was their moral and spiritual condition. Is there not an essential difference between it and the condition of those regular and devout communicants, whose right to attend celebration at other times without actual participation would be implicitly assailed by that rubric which, on Archdeacon Randall's motion, was adopted in a thin House by a small majority? And ought this difference to be forgotten and ignored when St. Chrysostom is cited on this subject?

"There is, at least there ought to be, no difference of opinion as to the extreme undesirableness of inviting the presence of indevout and alien spectators at the most solemn mysteries of the Church, and as little in regard to the ruinous mistake, or, rather, the undutifulness to our Lord, and the starving of the soul's life, which would be involved in the practical substitution of attendance for sacramental reception. Attendance, however devout, is not in any sense an equivalent to reception, and attendants, as such, are on a lower footing than receivers, for they are not fully participating in the Eucharistic action. But the persons whose present freedom so many are anxious to see secured are either (1) in the habit of regular, devout, and not infrequent Communion, or (2) training to become communicants. It is well known, I believe, to not a few

pastors that by attendance, under judicious guidance, persons are often led to form habits of communicating who otherwise might have gone on as non-communicants. What Mr. Carter and others desire to preserve is, not the 'attendance' of *non-communicants*, but the right of attendance for devotional purposes, on the part of communicants, at other celebrations beside those at which they communicate, and also of others who are learning to appreciate the sacramental privileges of the Church, and preparing to use them regularly. As to a 'frightfully rare reception of the Holy Mysteries,' have not we in England, during the last three centuries, been familiar with that evil as prevalent among large masses of professing Church-people, who have never been in the habit of 'attending, but have simply walked out of church as a matter of course on 'Sacrament days'?"[1]

In a letter written at a much later time (1896), Dr. Bright observed:

"If we now, on the score of ancient practice, forbid those who are not intending to communicate at a particular celebration to remain, or attend without communicating, we ought, in consistency, to press all whom we consider as faithful to communicate every Sunday. And who would dare to incur such a responsibility in our circumstances?

"My point here is, that it will not do for us to make a half-and-half, bit-by-bit, eclectic use of ancient methods or rules in this matter. All that we can do is to follow, as far as may be, the mind of the Early Church under gravely different conditions."

[1] "Letters and Memoirs of William Bright," p. 170 (passage written in 1872); see also pp. 172–3.

Dr. Bright went further than this, and sharply criticized the average Service which constituted the ordinary worship of an Anglican congregation:

"An ancient Christian would certainly have been very much astonished if he could have been taken on Sunday morning to a choral Matins and Ante-Communion (so-called). He would have said, 'Is *that* all you Christian people do at the Lord's Day Morning Worship?' On his Lord's Day he had been wont to attend a Service which did incomparably more in the way of bringing home the great realities of the supernatural order than Morning Prayer, as such, can do. And it is just at this point that frequent attendance in a reverent spirit, by those who do periodically and devoutly communicate, meets a want and secures an object. It makes people feel what is expressed in Heb. x. 19–25 and xii. 22–24. And it is just in this realization of the Presence of the Kingdom of God that our English temperament falls so far below the primitive Christian standard. As Dean Butler once said to me, 'What we want the people to get hold of is, that something very great takes place at Church, which cannot take place elsewhere.' The Daily Office does not impress this fact, and the Eucharist does; that is the difference."[1]

15. Thus the type of parochial teaching which now began to prevail may be illustrated by the following passage from Berdmore Compton's "Catholic Sacrifice":

"Many of you may now be about to claim your privilege of accepting the invitation to both parts of Eucharistic

[1] "Letters and Memoirs of William Bright," p. 177.

action. Many who have already done this to-day, may join again in the first part, the Eucharistic oblation, may join in worshipping the Unseen High Priest, Who presents their oblation, Who gives Himself to others afterwards, as He gave Himself to *them* this morning."[1]

[1] Berdmore Compton, "The Catholic Sacrifice," p. 79.

CHAPTER XIII

NINETEENTH-CENTURY OBJECTIONS TO THE PRACTICE

HAVING given a summary of modern advocates of the practice and their arguments, it is now necessary to give a summary of the opposition.

1. The ablest nineteenth-century opponent of non-communicating attendance is certainly Scudamore. His treatise on the "Communion of the Laity" is the most elaborate statement of the case against this practice: it is the influence which can be clearly traced in most later opponents, and the source from which their authorities are largely derived.

It is an accepted principle with Scudamore that the whole ordinance of the Eucharist is indivisible. When Wilberforce asked why it should be thought unlawful to join in the Sacrifice without going on to the Sacrament, Scudamore replies that "the commemoration of the Sacrifice is altogether dependent on our eating and drinking of the ordained symbols of that Sacrifice."[1]

Christ "does not at first institute the memorial, and

[1] Scudamore, p. 16.

then command us to partake thereof, but He commands us to partake, and when we are so doing, then to remember Him." [1]

"This," argues Scudamore, "is the prescribed mode, the *only* prescribed mode, of that commemorative action. Unless we eat and drink, we do not show His Death. In short, by the very nature and appointment of the rite, we *cannot* join in the Sacrifice without going on to the Sacrament; for without that which is here termed the Sacrament there is no proper representation of the Sacrifice of Christ." [2]

And this conclusion is supported by the Jewish analogy of the peace offering, the whole of which was to be eaten on the same day by those who offered it.[3] The victim "was to be consumed within a prescribed time, by a company of lay worshippers, or the sacrifice was not acceptable to God, or imputed to him that offered it." [4] Scudamore, indeed, admits that "We are not told, indeed, in so many words, that he was himself actually to partake," but the contrary seems to him most unreasonable and quite incredible.[5] However, he acknowledges that "in arguing from a Jewish sacrifice to the Christian Sacrament, no inference, however probable, can be considered certain, unless it is confirmed by the inspired writers of the New Testament." Such confirmation he thinks we possess in the words, "Are not they which *eat* of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?" [6]

[1] Scudamore, p. 16. [2] *Ibid.* p. 17. [3] *Ibid.* p. 19.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 21. [5] *Ibid.* p. 22. [6] *Ibid.* pp. 25, 26.

This singularly rigid and narrow conception of the relation of the Sacrifice to the Sacrament, that the memorial of Christ's Death is only shown by eating, determines the whole of Scudamore's discussion. But there is no serious attempt to consider the principles of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The doctrinal teaching of Christendom is virtually left out.

Scudamore points out that reception of the Sacrament by every person present was the original practice; or, as he terms it, the "original rule."[1] But he adds that

"there was an occasional inconvenience" in the observance of this "original rule," "which led in the course of time to some very important changes. It might easily happen, especially in those churches which had a daily celebration, that a person was indisposed to communicate, though, at the same time, not willing to forego the privilege of united prayer."[2]

"There were," says Scudamore,[3] "three modes of acting in such a case. A person who did not wish to remain could absent himself from the common worship of the faithful, or he could be present and either remain to the end or leave before the celebration. It is probable that on common days most would prefer to be absent altogether; but on the Lord's day, and on other festivals, as long as no other public service was provided, this course was almost precluded, as it would inevitably expose those who adopted it to the suspicion of apostasy. Nor would they be free from all risk of a similar misconstruction if they attended the first part of the Service only and withdrew with the Catechumens or with the Penitents; while to retire at any

[1] Scudamore, p. 10. [2] *Ibid.* p. 11. [3] *Ibid.* p. 13.

other time would necessarily produce confusion, as no such departure was contemplated or provided for in the prescribed ritual of the Church. They naturally would prefer, and there is evidence that they did prefer, to remain till the conclusion of the Service."[1]

Scudamore holds that the Church then intervened to forbid the rising practice. He asserts that the highest class of Penitents, who were permitted to be present but not to receive, were not present to offer but only to behold others in the enjoyment of a blessing of which they were unworthy. He thinks that the Church of the Fathers preferred the absence of the laity from the Eucharist to their attendance without receiving,[2] and understands the term "communicants" to denote not those who were generally qualified to partake, but those who on a given occasion intended to partake.[3]

However, he says that

"by the latter part of the fourth century it had evidently become impossible to enforce a strict observance of the Apostolic rule, and opinions differed as to the best course to be then taken. At Alexandria, as we have seen, the laity who did not communicate had long been *permitted*, as a century or less later they were *encouraged*, to remain till the dismissal. But the more general custom was for them to leave before the Communion."[4]

What was the precise moment of their withdrawal is not clear.

[1] Scudamore, p. 14.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 53.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 66.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 71.

"The precise point at which they left is, however, of less importance: the fact is certain that from the fourth century downwards it was a very common thing for persons in full communion to depart before the distribution of the consecrated elements." [1]

But this really means that they remained for the Consecration and the Offering, but departed before the reception. In other words, they shared in the Sacrifice.[2]

Scudamore's personal objections to the practice of non-communicating attendance are that the elements became the avowed object of direct adoration; [3] that this is facilitated by unprimitive views of the Real Presence; that such adoration is a

"danger especially great when the people are taught that by assisting merely without communicating at the Service wherein Christ's very Presence is exhibited on earth, they may receive an earnest of that privilege which is perpetually afforded to the saints in bliss, a foretaste of the beatific vision."

To Scudamore's mind this is simply a "superstitious tendency." [4]

But it is impossible not to see that the real meaning of the Eucharistic Sacrifice is not considered in these objections.

2. A second opponent of the practice was Freeman. Freeman, in his curiously mixed, but in some respects admirable treatise on the "Principles of Divine

[1] Scudamore, p. 73.
[2] *Cf. ibid.* pp. 78, 79.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 120.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 121.

Service," published in 1855, argued against non-communicating attendance on the following ground:

"Neither, again, does the ancient system, rightly understood and taken in conjunction with Christ's own ordinance, lend any support to another Mediæval habit, closely allied to the former one, of taking part, as it is called, in the Sacrifice without receiving. In the old system, the kind of offering which, and which alone, was of power to retain the people in the covenanted estate, was the peace or eucharistic offering. This, offered and partaken of thrice a year at least, was, as has been shown, the condition and channel of Israelitish life. Sin offerings and burnt offerings came in, on those occasions, as the preparation for this, or as an enhancement of it. It is true they might be offered independently. But on what ground? as an inference from the nature of the peace offering, in which they were in kind contained, and by an arbitrary dissociation of its sacrificial from its receptive features? No. There were rules which provided for separate offering. Now, this is exactly what there is *not* in the Gospel system. Our Lord ordained one rite, and that one Eucharistic: doubtless because there was to be but one all-containing service. And whoever undertakes to dissever what God, in that rite, has joined together, is surely guilty of most unwarrantable and dangerous presumption."[1]

3. Moberly, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, in his Bampton Lecture of 1868, on the Administration of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ, argued that the only possible place which a faithful Christian can have when the Eucharist is celebrated is the place of a communicant.

[1] Freeman, "Principles of Divine Service," pt. 2, p. 280.

"It is, indeed, very possible that there is this great difference between the conduct of those whom St. Chrysostom refers to, and the conduct of those who do the like in the present day, that while in the former case it may have been merely a fashion of carelessness and neglect, it is in the latter the effect of theory and intended as reverence. But I do not see that the argument is the less applicable to the one case than to the other, even if this be so, while the theory exemplified in the modern practice is precisely that against which it is my particular purpose to object." [1]

"The observations which I have made upon the primitive doctrine of Holy Communion, as excluding the Roman practice of private Masses, appear to me to tell with not less force against the recently introduced usage in some churches of the Anglican Communion, of persons of adult age and confirmed, who are, therefore, capable of communicating, remaining in the church during the time of the celebration and witnessing without partaking of the Sacrament. Is it supposed that this is a primitive practice? Is it not certain that St. Chrysostom speaks of it in the severest terms when adopted, apparently as a new thing, among the careless and imperfectly instructed Churchmen of Constantinople in his own days? And if other denunciations of it are seldom found in the writings of other ancient Fathers, is not the true explanation of the absence of such denunciations to be found in the fact that such an usage was absolutely unknown and unthought of in the Early Church? And does it not militate directly against the fundamental idea of the commemorative Sacrifice as the great and solemn Offering on the part of the whole Church that men should thus, not refrain only, but exhibit in a sort of

[1] Moberly (afterwards Bishop of Salisbury), Bampton Lecture, 1868, on the Administration of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ, pp. 177–180, 3rd edit., 1883.

presumption of will-worship, the fact of their determination to refrain from Communion? Is it not, in fact, a part of, the natural result of, the logical consequence of, the Romish doctrine, which regards the entire Sacrifice as completed by the sacrificing priest singly and alone, and ignores the necessary though subordinate part which the Church in her faithful people contributes to the joint act?

"The only possible place which a faithful lay Christian, or, I would add, a priest not celebrating, can rightly have when the Holy Eucharist is celebrated, is the place of a communicant. If there be reasons and causes personal to himself why he should not on the particular occasion communicate, the same reasonable causes require his absence from the celebration."

4. The practice of non-communicating attendance was opposed by Goulburn, Dean of Norwich, in an Essay published in 1874. Goulburn objected to the practice of

"remaining in the church during the entire celebration, as an inferior act of devotion having a quasi-sacramental efficacy, without presenting one's self as a communicant. I say," he adds, "*as an inferior act of devotion having a quasi-sacramental efficacy;* because, of course, if practised with other motives and views, non-communicating attendance might be quite harmless, perhaps in some cases desirable. It might very reasonably be thought that for young people about to be confirmed, to witness the celebration of the Lord's Supper once or twice, before they are called upon to take part in it themselves, might be advantageous and impressive, might take off that gloss of novelty which is so apt to distract people in exercises of devotion, and might help them to communicate, when the time came for their

doing so, more quietly and calmly, and with less excitement. Again, there might arise a necessity (or what is next door to a necessity) for the practice we are calling in question. Children old enough to come to church with their parents, might yet be too young to find their way home alone. Clergy who have already communicated, and would find it unedifying to repeat that action, and impossible to do so with any freshness and liveliness of devotional feeling, might yet be obliged to lend their assistance at a second celebration, lest the Service should be unduly and inconveniently prolonged. And, I would add, that in choral celebrations chorister boys might, in my judgment, be properly enough kept through the whole Office, on the ground of their function being a necessary one, if only the Service could be contracted within such limits as not to weary and disgust the minds of children; for, unless this condition were secured, it might be wiser and more charitable to the lambs of the fold to dispense with the choral celebration altogether. But all these cases, and others which might be imagined, have a totally different colour from that which non-communicating attendance assumes when adopted as a piece of devotion, and as a normal practice of the spiritual life. Looked at in this light, it has very strong attractions for devout minds; nor need we doubt, while most solemnly and earnestly protesting against it, that they who practise it do so under the belief that they gain edification from it. The idea that the Lord Himself becomes, after and in virtue of the consecration of the elements, externally present in the church, quite apart from His reception by the penitent and believing communicant, and quite independently of any action of the human mind whereby His presence is recognized, this idea lays the mind under a certain spell, which is found to make worship easier, and to excite a sort of reverence

which seems to faint and flag, as soon as Christ is thought of rather in connection with the minds of His people than with the place in which they are gathered together. But what if the idea be an effect of the imagination? . . ."

Goulburn proceeds to argue that

"if a man makes of this Gift of Christ another use, never indicated by the Giver, while declining that use which is indicated, surely there is room for doubt whether the devotional sentiments which he excites in his mind by this other use, are sound and good." [1]

Accordingly, Goulburn took as the text of his Lecture the passage from Exodus about the manna: how "some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms and stank, and Moses was wrath with them."

Dean Goulburn's criticisms are here quoted at some length, because they are a characteristic example of the grounds of objection common at that period. They show how very little the principles underlying the practice of non-communicating attendance were understood. No advocate of the practice to-day would urge it in the terms which Goulburn underlines: "as an inferior act of devotion having a quasi-sacramental efficacy." Goulburn's objection to it, if urged on such a ground, was natural enough. He was, indeed, aware that the practice was supported on the assertion that the Eucharist is a Sacrifice as well as a Sacrament.[2] He acknowledged that the Eucharist is a sacrificial rite commemorative of the Sacrifice of the death of

[1] Essay, p. 20. [2] *Ibid.* p. 24.

Christ. But he asked, "to which of the several species of sacrifice does the Eucharist belong?" He considered it as a Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

"According to the teaching of our own Church, then, the Eucharist, in whatever *other* sense it may be a sacrifice (and into this point, as it would carry us too far from the subject now before us, we do not propose at present to enter) is most assuredly a Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving." [1]

And then he proceeded to argue that a peace offering, or sacrifice of thanksgiving, could not be observed at all unless it was received.

"We conclude hence that, though there be a Sacrifice in the Eucharist, even a thank offering and a Christian Passover, it is a Sacrifice so intimately bound up with the Sacrament, that it cannot be offered, nor can we have any the smallest benefit from it, unless the Sacrament be partaken of." [2]

This emphatic conclusion is, however, reached simply by declining to discuss the doctrine of Sacrifice: "It would carry us too far from the subject now before us." He does not propose to enter upon that discussion. But it is a curiously untheological proceeding to discuss a practice founded on doctrine without fully and carefully analyzing the doctrine upon which it is founded. Goulburn appears quite strangely unconscious how inadequately he has treated the practice, when he has never discussed the profound doctrinal relation between the Eucharistic Offering and

[1] Essay, p. 25. [2] *Ibid.* p. 26.

the Passion of our Lord. This is deeply significant. For it will generally be found that objection to non-communicating attendance is traceable to misconceptions of the nature of the Eucharist as an Offering.

It is difficult to read Goulburn's Essay without a consciousness that he occupied a standpoint which is now archaic and remote. He does not really answer the advocates of non-communicating attendance, for he never faces their conception of Eucharistic Offering. And his receptionist and subjective view of the nature of the Eucharistic Presence rendered it exceedingly difficult for him to appreciate the idea that the Eucharist could be in any real sense presented before the Father.

5. Dr. Hort threw the weight of his influence into the opposition against the practice of non-communicating presence. In answer to an inquirer, he wrote in 1886:

"To the best of my knowledge there is no evidence for the practice of non-communicating attendance in at least the first four centuries, except either as a *penal privation* inflicted on one class of penitents, or as a popular abuse rebuked by authority. The doctrinal grounds on which it is defended appear to me to receive no support from Scripture or from any formulary of the Church of England; and the results to which it leads are, in my belief, disastrous." [1]

He also wrote to Dr. Westcott on the subject, in the following terms:

[1] "Life and Letters of F. J. A. Hort," vol. ii. p. 339.

"As far as I see at present, the only shadow of evidence for the practice [of non-communicating attendance] in ante-Nicene times is a curious passage of Clement ('Strom.,' i. 5), which shows that some left the elements for the people themselves to take, so that any one deciding at last to abstain, might abstain without positive refusal of a proffered portion; but this is different in principle. And, as far as I see, the fourth century knew the practice only, either as a penal privation (for the consistentes) or as a popular irregularity condemned by the bishops.

"It is, I imagine, best not to touch needlessly on the question of Sacrifice, though that is no doubt at the bottom of the practice, so far as it is not a mere aping of unreformed usage."[1]

The last sentence of this letter of Dr. Hort, deprecating needless reference to the question of Sacrifice, reminds us that Dr. Hort's views on the heavenly priesthood of our Lord were of such a kind as to render belief in the sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist, as an Offering to the Father, difficult. Dr. Hort maintained that

"the idea expressed in the hymn, 'His prevailing death He pleads,' has no Apostolic warrant, and cannot even be reconciled with Apostolic doctrine. It is, of course, only by an accommodation that we can use the language of time at all in speaking of things Divine; but so far as the Atonement in relation to God is spoken of in any terms of time, the Bible seems to me to teach us to think of it as lying entirely in the past, a thing done once for all; that

[1] Letter of Dr. Hort to Dr. Westcott, "Life and Letters of F. J. A. Hort," vol. ii. p. 338.

which remains continually being the eternal subjection to the Father's will, of which the obedience even unto death was the manifestation. Do consider Heb. x. 1–23, 35–39 (especially 2, 3, 12–14). What is said of 'intercession' seems to belong simply to the presenting of human prayers as the Head of the race, or some cognate idea. All traces of Christian Sacrifice that I can find in the New Testament represent them distinctively as 'living,' because they are founded, not on the Death alone, but on the Death as fulfilled and interpreted by the Resurrection." [1]

Thus the whole question rests, on Dr. Hort's own showing, on interpreting eternal matters in terms of time. It is a question of metaphysical standpoint. If Christ's Offering is the abiding Offering of self, the practice of non-communicating attendance becomes correspondingly reasonable.

6. John Wordsworth, Bishop of Salisbury, deprecated the practice in his volume on the "Ministry of Grace" (1900).

He argued in some respects very unexpectedly, since he also deprecated a daily Eucharist.

"It is not, however, desirable that our English clergy should grow to depend upon a daily Eucharist. The Roman Church has taken it up, after considerable reluctance, as part of the general tendency to assimilate the parochial clergy to the monastic orders. But it has only succeeded by separating the clergy more and more from the people who 'assist' as spectators or worshippers, not as communicants. The result before the Reformation was, as we have seen, to make assistance take the place of Communion for the laity, except once a year. It would naturally have the same sort

[1] "Life and Letters of F. J. A. Hort," vol. ii. p. 213.

of sad result now, and it is indeed doing so, wherever the clergy are acting in defiance of the rule as to the presence of three communicants. Such 'assistance,' if it became habitual, is destructive of the sense of responsibility and individual duty; it feeds vague emotion, and encourages a false system of religion by deputy. It tends to exalt the ornaments and accessories, and all the minutiæ of the Service without encouraging full reflection on its inner meaning, and its bearing on conduct. Nor is the effect upon the clergy satisfactory. It is not good for them to be so separate from their people. Spiritual pride and self-will are, in many cases, produced by the separation. Control of the thoughts and full realization of the greatness of the Liturgy are made difficult for them." [1]

Bishop Wordsworth appears to have held that to assist as a worshipper and not as a communicant is, if it becomes habitual, "destructive of the sense of responsibility and individual duty, . . . feeds vague emotion, and encourages a false system of religion by deputy." But if this habitual assistance means constant and habitual pleading of the Redemptive Sacrifice, and this is what those who practise it really mean, the results would surely be very different. Indeed, it is difficult to reconcile what Bishop Wordsworth says here with his remarks in an early part of the same book.[2]

"The Sacrament of His Blood was a new thought to them, interpreted by Calvary and the Ascension. It bore historic witness to the Atonement, and to its perpetual pleading by their Saviour, while to the believer it became

[1] "Ministry of Grace," p. 337.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 112.

the sign of the new covenant, the infusion of a new personal life into the soul, the gift of a new heart and a new spirit."

We notice here that Bishop Wordsworth affirms what Dr. Hort denied: Christ's perpetual pleading of the Atonement in heaven. But if Christ is in reality so engaged in heaven, the constantly pleading by the worshipper in the Eucharist is nothing but the counterpart on earth of Christ's own heavenly work. And, so understood, it cannot be charged with the dangerous results which the Bishop of Salisbury ascribes to it.

Elsewhere Bishop Wordsworth is reported to have said that

"There were two facts they had to bear in mind: the one, which was a very important one, the general fact that in the early ages of the Church, non-communicating attendance was uncommon. On the other hand, at the time of the Reformation, not only were the adherents of the old way anxious for the attendance of non-communicants, but the Reformers, such as Archbishop Hermann and Cranmer, did not seem to have thought much about the point, or to have at all objected to it. He had always been brought up to feel that a habit of non-communicating attendance was wrong. He could not feel clear about it even now; but after a careful study of the history of the Prayer-book, he was forced to the conclusion that the Church of England had nowhere ordered the withdrawal of attendants." [1]

7. The Rev. J. T. Levens, in "Aspects of the Holy Communion" (1911), observes that

[1] Bishop of Salisbury, *Church Times*, April 24, 1896.

"to say that the Prayer-book forbids non-communicating attendance is unwarrantable, but it is permissible to say that such attendance is not encouraged. To forbid it would be to deprive the Christian laity of a right, and to wound the consciences of many of God's saints; to encourage it would be to lower the Church's ideal, and to open the door again to possible abuse. The most that can be claimed for those who are present at the Holy Communion but who do not communicate, is, that they join in the Sacrifice, not actually but sympathetically." [1]

This paragraph embodies an intermediate view. On the one hand, non-communicating attendance is not to be forbidden, for it is a layman's right. He may not be deprived of it. On the other hand, he is not to be encouraged in the exercise of this right, for such encouragement would lower the Church's ideal. But it is difficult to see why the layman can possess a right to do that which, if the Church were to encourage him in doing, would lower the Church's ideal. It is necessary to ask on what ground is it asserted that the laity possess the right to this practice? or why it should wound the consciences of many of God's saints to be discouraged from doing what, if encouraged, would lower the Church's ideal? The layman does not possess a mere abstract liberty, independent of the question, What would be the consequences of its exercise upon the Church's ideal? Nor would the Church surely infringe the layman's right if it prohibited a practice whose tendencies it considered to be

[1] "Aspects of the Holy Communion," p. 194.

dangerous. More especially is this the case if presence without reception is only a sympathetic, but not an actual, joining in the Sacrifice. We certainly should not care to defend the layman's right if this were the whole religious gain of the practice. The fact is, it is necessary to go further or not so far. The doctrinal principles of this passage do not justify the practical conclusion. But the attempt to mediate between the two schools is exceedingly instructive. It is not the line which an opponent would have taken years ago. And it testifies to the increased appreciation of the practice, and the necessity for permitting what it does not see the way to encourage.

8. It may be added here that the idea of non-communicating presence finds considerable support in modern Protestantism.

One afterwards ordained in the English Church writes:

"I myself was brought up a Dissenter among the *Plymouth Brethren*, and I remember well that we children and young people were always present every Sunday at the breaking of bread, as it was called, but without receiving the bread and wine."[1]

Reference may be also made, for Presbyterian ideas on the practice, to the writings of Dr. Milligan:

"It is well known that the feeling of the ancient Church did not allow her to go on to the celebration of the Eucharist till the heathen and even the catechumens had

[1] "Attendance at Holy Communion the Way to Communion," Rev. J. Goring, p. 5.

been sent out. The principle is to be found in our Lord's words in St. Mark vii. 6. . . Our children in Scotland remain in church during the celebration of the Supper, because they are not strangers. Those also are not strangers who, though they may not communicate on the special occasion, do communicate on other occasions or at other hours."[1]

The present writer found himself some time ago taken severely to task by an Evangelical Churchman for quoting Protestant evidence as to presence at the Lord's Supper without reception. It was argued that the view of the Service adopted by Protestants was so very different from that of the English Church, that no real analogy existed between them. But the Eucharistic teaching of Dr. Milligan approximated to that of the English Church. His testimony to Presbyterian ideals of the permissible uses of the Eucharist is most valuable and interesting. It ought not to be left out from an account of the Christian practice. It shows, at least, that the Presbyterian interpretation of the Eucharist finds nothing antagonistic to Evangelical Christianity in the practice of non-communicating presence.

[1] Milligan, "Ascension," etc., p. 304 *n.*

CHAPTER XIV

PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

It remains to summarize briefly the historical evidence and the dogmatic principles already contemplated, and to draw our own conclusions.

I

We have seen that in the first age the Eucharist was the central habitual act of Christian devotion at which the whole Community assembled; that every person present was a recipient of the Gift; and that the Eucharist was taken to those who were unable to attend. Reception, then, by the entire congregation is the primitive ideal.

But while this ideal was for a time maintained, and while the constant liability to persecution and martyrdom must have contributed to create a sharp severance between the Church and the world, and to intensify Christian reality, the ideal condition did not endure. Difficulties arose. People began to absent themselves from the Lord's Day Eucharist. They felt unequal to reception of the Eucharist every week. The Church

was, therefore, confronted with the problem how to meet this difficulty. An attempt was made to enforce constant reception, by making it a rule of the Church.[1] With what success this effort was attended it is not easy to ascertain. What is certain is that in the long run it failed. The Canons remained upon the statute books of the Church, but became quite obsolete.

1. The first recognition of non-communicating attendance came in the penitential system of the ancient Church. One class of penitents was expressly allowed to attend the Eucharist, but forbidden to receive. This was a common occurrence, and would last in individual cases for years. Thus the congregation were accustomed to the habitual presence of non-communicants. This practice was conceded as a privilege to those who were returning to a better life. It could not, therefore, have been regarded by the Early Church as antagonistic to Apostolic principle.

2. The second instance of non-communicating attendance was the case of the children. It was not the practice of the Primitive Church to exclude children from the Eucharist. Directions are given in the Liturgies for their supervision and good behaviour. They were communicated in infancy. They were probably communicated regularly in the early centuries. But the custom grew to communicate them once in infancy and then not again for years. Meanwhile they were present in the congregation. It may be noted here that the presence of children at the Communion

[1] Antioch took one line; Alexandria, another.

without reception prevails among Presbyterians to this day.

3. We have also found that the practice of the ancient Churches differed. In Rome, it was customary for the faithful always to receive. But this was a custom which St. Jerome said he neither censured nor endorsed. He was deeply conscious of the dangers of unworthy reception, and held that every one must determine for himself. And the rule at Rome was afterwards relaxed. In Africa, Tertullian recommended individuals to reserve the Sacrament in certain circumstances and communicate themselves at home. In Alexandria, as early as 200 A.D., reception of the Eucharist was left to individual decision. In Antioch, Chrysostom's eloquent but inexact expressions advocated very strongly the duty of reception; but his words must be balanced by his later teaching at Constantinople, and by the recorded instance in which he sanctioned presence but disallowed reception. In France, the practice of non-communicating attendance was strongly advised by St. Cæsarius about the year 500. It was also authorized by Episcopal Synods at Orleans and elsewhere.

4. We have seen that non-communicating attendance was extended by the changed conditions of the Church's life. The two great changes in the political world, the nominal Conversion of the Roman Empire, and the invasion of the barbaric tribes, crowded the Church with vast masses of half-converted adherents, for whom it was necessary to provide. The possible alternatives before the Church were, either to construct

a different type of service for the habitual devotions of these new converts, or else to sanction their presence at the Eucharist without reception. The Church determined on the latter course. It was considered better to keep the multitude associated with the Eucharistic devotion, at any rate in its aspect as an Offering, than to train them in another form of worship which would have rested only on ecclesiastical sanction and not on that of Jesus Christ. This decision was one in which all the ancient Churches concurred. There was no divergent practice anywhere. The presence of non-communicants became habitual and prevalent everywhere.

A further development appeared, but centuries later. It became the practice for no one to communicate except the priest. This was the standard insisted upon by the Devonshire rebels in the sixteenth century: "We will have no one to communicate except the priest."

This Mediæval extreme gives the key to much that followed. The aim of the English Reformers was to restore the Apostolic ideal. They desired to insist with all their power that the Eucharist existed for the purpose of reception. This was the intention of the very emphatic Exhortation of 1552. Persons who never received the Sacred Gift were addressed as "neglecting, despising, and mocking the Testament of Christ." They were rebuked as those who "stand by as gazers and lookers on them that do communicate, and be no partakers of the same themselves." They were exhorted,

"Wherefore, rather than you should do so, depart you hence, and give place to them that be godly disposed." All this was evidently addressed to the habitual non-communicant. It does not contemplate the case of the devout recipient, who, for various reasons, is present without reception at other times. It is recognized by opponents of the practice of non-communicating presence that the notion of prohibiting it had not entered Cranmer's mind. We have seen that an attempt was made in the Lower House of the Canterbury Convocation in 1562 to introduce such a prohibition, and that the attempt did not succeed. Thus, even during the time when this Exhortation formed part of our Book of Common Prayer, there was no prohibition of non-communicating attendance in the English Church.

We have seen that if non-communicating attendance very largely ceased, that cessation was due to the Puritan pressure rather than to the English Church regulations. Individual authorities exerted their influence to suppress the practice, but in so doing they exceeded the directions of the Book of Common Prayer.

But after this Exhortation had remained in the Prayer-book above a century, it was cancelled, and has never been restored. It forms no part of the rules of the English Church. Whatever it meant, whatever its intention, it is removed from the directions given us.

II

1. With regard to early Tractarian advocacy of presence without reception, we have seen the curious attempt to justify it on a theory of spiritual Communion, instead of basing it on the sacrificial aspect.

2. But we have also found the latter argument speedily making its appearance; as also the penetrating statement that the primitive practice of Reservation for those debarred from attendance at the Sacrifice shows that the Early Church saw no absolute inseparability of the two aspects of Offering and Reception.

3. We have seen the argument urged that non-communicating attendance became necessitated by the lowering of the primitive piety and the altered conditions of the Church's life; and that the alternative would have been the provision of some service of a non-Eucharistic type, which would have estranged the faithful from Eucharistic offering and intercession.

4. We have found the argument propounded that since the Eucharist was ever held by the Church to be beneficial to others beside the offerers and receivers, whether absent or present, it is illogical to exclude from the benefit those whose presence is intended to express their sympathy with the act.

5. We have found the objection that such a practice leads to substitute attendance at the Sacrifice for reception of the Gift met by the retort that the

cessation of the practice has resulted in a non-communicating people; that the Eucharist had passed away from the people's religious life; and that they must once more be furnished with the conception of Eucharistic worship and offering; and that presence at the Eucharist is in itself a valuable means of instruction and preparation for approach.

6. We have also seen it argued that the long-continued reaction from the non-communicating practice of the unreformed Church has so obscured the doctrine of Eucharistic Oblation that multitudes of communicants are wholly ignorant thereof, and practically communicate in reception without consciously communicating in oblation at all.

7. Also that the true remedy for undue prominence of either the Oblation or the Reception, and for the neglect of Communion in either, consists in the comprehensive recognition of the whole of the Eucharistic doctrine, and in carefully teaching its separate departments and not in throwing slight upon either.

What has deeply influenced the modern Anglican advocates of the practice and constantly lies behind their arguments is the increasing consciousness that non-communicating presence was a development to which all Christendom except the English Church was still committed. The sense of provincialism and isolation weighed heavily upon them.

1. On the side of the opposition to the practice we have found an argument drawn from the nature of the Jewish peace offering, and the reception of the Paschal

lamb: as if reception of the Paschal lamb could be placed on a level with reception of the Body and Blood of Christ. Those who hold the traditional belief as to the nature of the Eucharistic Gift understand why the ancient Church applied to it such epithets as "awful" and "tremendous." But in so doing there is in reality drawn a wide distinction between offering and receiving. The difference in the nature of the Gift absolutely prohibits an argument from the Paschal lamb, that we cannot offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice without receiving the Sacramental Gift.

2. We have also found the assertion made that the only possible place which a faithful Christian can have when the Eucharist is celebrated is the place of a communicant. The assertion was supported by reference to Chrysostom, and by recoil from the supposed logical consequence of Roman doctrine. But scanty consideration was given to the doctrine of Eucharistic Sacrifice.

3. We have also found opposition to the practice when that practice was advocated as an inferior act of devotion having a quasi-sacramental efficacy. And we must acknowledge that the objection is valid, for the practice ought never to have been presented in such a light. But we saw that the opposition in this case was connected with subjective ideas of the nature of the Eucharistic presence, and with a refusal to discuss the doctrine of Eucharistic Sacrifice.

4. We have also found the practice rejected by those who deny that our Lord is pleading His prevailing

Death now in heaven. This is perfectly natural. For if Christ is not offering in heaven, the Church can scarcely be regarded as offering on earth. Non-communicating attendance requires belief that the Eucharistic Offering is parallel to Christ's heavenly Priesthood.

5. We have also found, what seems most inconsequent, Christ's perpetual pleading of the Atonement in heaven affirmed, and yet the non-communicating presence deprecated as feeding vague emotion. This is a view which seems peculiarly difficult to understand. For the practice is simply founded on the idea of pleading the Atonement on earth, as Christ is doing in heaven.

We can only express an opinion here that if the nineteenth-century Anglican advocacy and opposition to the practice be compared together, the overwhelming weight of strictly theological argument is on the former side. On that side only is there any dogmatic attempt to give proportionate weight to the two main aspects of the Eucharist. We see also that practice and doctrine are intimately connected; and that this practice rests upon three great inquiries: What is the true conception of the Eucharist? What is the work of Christ in heaven? What is the propitiation of Christ upon the Cross? If the Atonement is an abiding propitiation, which Christ continues in heaven and the Church on earth, then non-communicating presence is only a practical expression of the Godward aspect of the Atonement.

III

And here it ought to be observed that if a priest were to take upon himself to forbid non-communicating attendance, the laity would have the right to ask by what authority? For no such authority exists. Indeed, such a procedure would be utterly illegal and indefensible from the standpoint of the directions of the Book of Common Prayer.

A priest of the English Church is said to have recently expressed regret that the practice of non-communicating attendance is on the increase among his people. He desired most emphatically to dissociate himself from an act which a learned person once described as "an act of disobedience and profanation." He asserted that

"the Communion Service assumes throughout that those who are present are also Communicants. 'Draw near and take,' the invitation runs. 'Grant that we receiving these Thy creatures of bread and wine.' 'Humbly beseeching Thee that all we who are partakers of this Holy Communion': these and many similar phrases abundantly prove, if proof is needed, that those who are present but do not communicate are only 'gazers upon' the Sacrament, and are, therefore, contravening the Twenty-fifth Article, which says, 'the Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon . . . but that we should duly use them.' The mind of the Church of England on this subject is expressed very plainly in the Homily on the worthy receiving of the Sacrament as follows: 'Where every one of

us must be guests and not gazers, eaters and not lookers, feeding ourselves and not hiring others to feed for us.'"

The priest accordingly expressed his determination to check this practice of non-communicating presence, at least in his own congregation. He referred to three Rubrics of the Communion Service as his authority. 1. The Rubric which says that "there shall be no celebration of the Lord's Supper except there be a convenient number to communicate with the priest according to his discretion." 2. The Rubric which says that

"if there be not above twenty persons in the parish of discretion to receive the Communion, yet there shall be no Communion, except four (or three at the least) communicate with the priest."

On these two Rubrics it is observed that

"the second fixes three as the lowest possible number of Communicants that must be present if there is to be a celebration at all; but this refers to very small parishes only, where there are not more than twenty persons who could be Communicants. The other Rubric leaves the fixing of the number to the discretion of the priest. When we turn to the beginning of the Communion Service we find another Rubric . . . which enables the presbyter to act upon the two Rubrics we have been considering. It runs as follows: 'So many as intend to be partakers of the Holy Communion, shall signify their names to the curate at least some time the day before.'"

On the authority of these principles and Rubrics

notice appears to have been given to the congregation that there would be no Communion on Saints' Days, or other week-days, unless four parishioners signify their names at least some time the day before as intending to communicate on the following day.

1. There are several remarks to be made upon this announcement. The first is, that the priest has taken the letter of the Rubrics without appreciating their historical intention. These Rubrics are directed against solitary Masses where the priest alone received. But it seems historically certain that they are not directed against the non-communicating attendance of persons who habitually receive. For it is obvious to the student that this idea had not entered Cranmer's mind.

2. Secondly, the enforcing of a minimum number of communicants is a very different thing from enforcing the entire congregation either to receive or to leave the church. It is the former course which the Rubric takes. It is most certainly not the latter. There is no Rubric compelling the non-communicant to leave the church. It is quite possible to believe in the rightfulness of non-communicating attendance, and at the same time to regulate that some shall be present to receive.

3. This is admittedly a case in which the opinion of the priest is opposed to the practice of his people. He objects to non-communicating attendance, and they desire it. We submit that the wiser course would have been to form a Guild of Communicants, and to secure among them a rota of attendance on different days, in

order that each Eucharist might be provided with recipients. This course would have emphasized the necessity of reception, and would have secured it. Whereas the course actually taken risks the very serious responsibility of refusing the Holy Communion to three persons who come desiring to receive it, since the priest has determined that unless there are four he will not consecrate.

4. It must further be remembered that whatever discretion a priest may possess, subject to the authority of the Bishop, in deciding whether the Eucharist is to be consecrated or not, he has reached the limit of his discretion when he has decided this. But he cannot exclude from the congregation those who do not wish at a given occasion to receive. Here the rights of the laity are certain. If a priest attempts to prevent the non-communicating presence of a regular communicant, he is transgressing the limits of his authority. There is no Rubric to which he can appeal. He has no discretion over the non-communicating presence of his people. He may have his opinion as to its advisability, or its relation to the genius of the English rite. But that is his opinion only. It is nothing more. It is contradicted by thousands of other priests in the English Church who have every right to maintain that their interpretation is just as legitimate as his.

If a priest asserts that those who, upon any given occasion, do not draw near and take, are gazers upon the Sacrament and contraveners of Article Twenty-five, his people, who are accustomed to the practice, will see

no force whatever in the accusation. They know that it is not true of them to say that they are mere gazers. They know that they have come to plead their own forgiveness through the Passion of Christ. To call them mere gazers is absolutely false to fact, and can only proceed from inability to appreciate their point of view. There will never be mutual understanding in the English Church so long as one school labels those who come to worship Christ as mere gazers, which is exactly what they are not. Men who believe that the value of the Eucharist is not restricted to the act of reception, which is its ultimate purpose, but not its only use, have at least a justification in principle for their presence which those who think differently might at least in fairness take into account.

IV

But what concerns us very deeply is to observe the consequences of the sixteenth-century reaction. Theoretically, the reaction was towards a more primitive condition. The ideal was a noble one. The Reformers desired to see the whole Christian congregation communicate every Lord's Day. But the result refuted their intentions. What actually happened was that the Church full of people at the Eucharist dwindled down to a mere handful. The constant Offering of the Eucharist ceased. The Eucharist itself became the infrequent rite, and actual reception became reduced to three times a year and less.

It becomes inevitable to offer some criticisms upon this result.

1. In the first place, it was not Apostolic. We cannot allow ourselves to be deluded into the view that the average Church of England presentation of devotion since the Puritan influence predominated, in the slightest degree resembles the Apostolic ideal. Custom, and a somewhat lengthy tradition, may imperceptibly affect our judgment, but it ought to be quite impossible to imagine that our devotions have been restored to an Apostolic state. We may acquiesce in existing habits; but if St. Paul or St. John visited the average English church, as it existed half a century or less ago, to find throngs of people at Morning or Evening Prayer, and only a scanty handful at the Eucharist, they would certainly have very much to say, and some of it would surely not be commendatory. If we took them to Mattins or Evensong, they would probably say: "Yes, this is your prayer meeting. Now, where is the Lord's own Service?" And we should have had to show them a scanty few in a corner, while the generality of the saints had disappeared. Whatever may be said in defence of this, it cannot by any stretch of imagination be termed Apostolic.

2. Moreover, what is very serious is that it has accustomed the English mind to consider another Service than Christ's Institution as the usual form of worship for Christian people. It has impressed the ideas of Mattins, rather than those of the Eucharist, on the great majority of English congregations. This

is their ordinary notion of a Service in Church. Neither the Offering nor the Reception are set perpetually before them. The Eucharist has become for the majority the occasional and infrequent Service. Masses of our people are still more or less strangers to the Lord's own Institution. They do not miss it, because they have been accustomed to live without it, although they have constantly attended church. And the consequence is a different spiritual level. For however devotional and helpful, and even sublime, Mattins and Evensong may be, it is obvious that the type of devotion which they create is different from that created by the Eucharist. And if the former be made, as they practically have been, habitual substitutes for the other, this fact may readily account for features in the Anglican spiritual temper and devotional air which we have the profoundest reason to deplore.

And this substitution of other Offices for the Eucharist we have contributed to impress upon English Nonconformity. For the Wesleyans have taken our non-Eucharistic forms, and perpetuated outside our limits what we perpetuate within. The responsibility of the English Church in practically lowering the Eucharistic level is sufficiently grave to a reflective mind.

3. Again, we are bound to reflect that this substitution of Mattins for the Eucharist is not the solution followed by any other ancient Church in the world. It is a mark of insularity. It makes the English Church peculiar, and unlike the rest of ancient Christendom.

Now, unless we are prepared to assert that the English Church alone is in the right, this provincialism must make us feel uncomfortable. For non-communicating attendance at the Eucharist is not a merely Roman use. It is just as much Eastern as it is Western. It is practised by those strongly anti-Roman Churches of Russia and of Greece.

4. Moreover, we may be perfectly certain that this result is not what the Reformers themselves anticipated or desired. They intended to restore Communion as the habitual devotion of Christian people. But if they could return and contemplate the three centuries' result of their endeavours, it is probable that they would be astounded. The place which the Eucharist occupies in the Book of Common Prayer is witness to the centrality designed for it in the practice of the English Church. That it should have become subordinated to its own introduction is a travesty of their intentions.

V

The lawfulness of separating the Eucharistic act of Offering from the act of reception presents a great difficulty to minds of a certain school. They point to the way in which Scripture not only insists on the aspect of reception, but even, while indicating the aspect of Memorial, intertwines in an inseparable manner the aspect of Communion with it. When Archdeacon Wilberforce drew the distinction between the two main aspects of the Eucharist, and asked why

it should be thought unlawful to join in the Sacrifice without going on to the Sacrament, Scudamore replied that in Scripture the whole Ordinance is clearly represented as indivisible and one, and the reception as an essential and integrant part of it. Christ's words, argued Scudamore,

"assuredly imply that the remembrance of Him intended, viz. the commemoration of the Sacrifice of His Death, is altogether dependent on our eating and drinking of the ordained symbols of that Sacrifice. He does not first institute the Memorial, and then command us to partake thereof, but He commands us to partake, and, when we are so doing, then to remember Him."

Thus also St. Paul observes, "As often as ye *eat* this bread and *drink* this cup, ye do show the Lord's Death till He come." Scudamore's conclusion was:

"We show therefore His death, we commemorate His Sacrifice, when we *partake* of that Bread and that Cup which represented Him offered for our sins upon the Cross. This is the prescribed mode, the *only* prescribed mode, of that commemorative action. Unless we eat and drink, we do not 'show His Death.' In short, by the very nature and appointment of the rite, we *cannot* join in the Sacrifice without going on to the Sacrament; for without that which is here termed the Sacrament, there is no proper representation of the Sacrifice of Christ."

This interpretation of St. Paul pushes a true idea to unjustifiable extremes. It is unquestionable that communion and not oblation is the most prominent idea in the Apostle's teaching. It is also true that the

ultimate purpose for the institution of the Eucharist is reception of the Body and Blood of Christ. But to assert the impossibility of joining in the Sacrifice without going on to the Sacrament, is to involve one's self in very serious difficulties.

1. It is only an inference from a text. It is not what Scripture actually says. It is certainly not an inevitable inference. Nor is there any exegetical necessity for such an interpretation. The form of the sentences is perfectly accounted for by a desire to emphasize communion as the supreme and final purpose of the institution. It will never be possible, from a purely critical point of view, to demonstrate that the words mean more than this. The form of the Scripture sentence suggests the ideal practice, which would be that every Christian should communicate each day the Eucharist is observed. But while the ideal is ever to be upheld as the goal toward which reforming efforts should advance, the Scripture sentence is not designed to ignore the actual conditions of individuals, nor to exclude from the Offering those who, for various reasons, are at any time unable or reluctant to receive the sacred Gift. There is really nothing in Scripture to show that it is unlawful to join in the Sacrifice without also receiving the Sacrament.

It may be well to add an interpretation of St. Paul's language by a most careful expositor of the seventeenth-century, William Estius:

"It should be noticed," Estius observes, "that Paul does not say, by eating and drinking, that is, by the act

of eating and drinking, ye proclaim the Lord's Death; but as often as, that is, whenever ye eat and drink. But the eating and drinking is performed either by the priest or by other faithful people, at the time when the Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of the Lord is offered. Or if afterwards there is a reception, as by the sick to whom the Sacrament is taken, it still belongs to the Sacrifice in which the Oblation was made. . . ."[1]

Thus he concludes that whosoever offers has part in the Eucharist, although he does not receive the Offering which has been made.

2. It should also be remembered that while the Offering of the Eucharist is a *collective* act of the whole Church, the reception is purely *individual*. The Offering is the act of the entire Body, the Christian Society, irrespective of the moral and spiritual condition of individuals among its members. With this collective Offering the individual identifies himself to the extent that his state allows. But fitness to plead the Offering is a different thing from fitness to receive the Gift. This is a principle which Christians in general admit, nay, assert. Unless it is true, then he who is unfit to communicate is unfit to pray. But if those who are unprepared to receive the Sacrament are yet prepared to join in the Church's devotions, that is, to plead Christ's Sacrifice, they are also qualified to plead that Sacrifice in Christ's appointed way.

No advocate of non-communicating attendance imagines that this is the highest use to which the Eucharist

[1] Estius, in 1 Cor. xi. 26.

can be put. Far transcending all other aspects is the sacramental, as effecting personal union between the believer's soul and its Lord. Still, non-communicating attendance has its subordinate use. There are good people who feel it to be better for them not to communicate as often as they have the opportunity of being present. There are others who have already received at an earlier hour and desire also to be present at a later Eucharist. It is an act of devotion. It is, indeed, a most helpful practice in the spiritual life.

3. The prohibition of non-communicating attendance would imply that the Offering benefits none but those who receive. But this is contradicted by the universal custom of Eucharistic intercession for the absent. In the Eucharist we plead not only for the congregation present, but also for those who are not there. The Offering, then, does good to those who are not present and therefore cannot receive. It prevails to bring blessings upon those who are far away. And if this be so, surely a close proximity to the Offering cannot deprive the non-communicant of the blessings of which he would be susceptible if absent from the Service.

4. Moreover, if there can be "no proper representation of the Sacrifice of Christ" without Eucharistic reception, it would seem to follow that there is no proper representation of it in Christian prayer. But we can surely represent this Sacrifice to the Father whenever we plead the Passion. This insistence on

Eucharistic reception as the only representation of the Sacrifice seems therefore to prove too much. It would detract from the value of non-Eucharistic intercession.

It is doctrinally inaccurate to say that the Sacrifice of Christ cannot be properly represented apart from Eucharistic reception. For surely that Sacrifice can be and is properly represented apart from the Eucharist? Is it not properly represented by our Lord in Heaven? Is it not properly represented in self-identification with the Sacrifice of the Cross? To infer from the form of the sentences in which the Eucharist was instituted the impossibility of joining in the Offering without going on to the reception, is to make an inference which the words could not have been intended to convey, because it is theologically unsound. The ordinance of the Eucharist cannot be indivisible; for the reason that Offering and reception are divisible; not merely in theory, but in fact. The practice of Reservation shows that the Church assumed the separability of the collective Offering from the individual reception; and the form of the Liturgies suggests that the Offering was complete before the reception was begun.

5. The fact that non-communicating attendance became a recognized practice, permitted, throughout the whole of ancient Christendom, shows that it was not regarded by the Church as conflicting with the mind of Christ. The common consent of East and West should surely weigh very considerably against an inference derived mainly from the form of a Scripture

statement. It shows that immense authority belongs to another interpretation. This, of course, will appeal differently to different types of mind. But wherever the authority of East and West combined is respected, the permission of non-communicating attendance will not be easily set aside.

VI

The practical problem, therefore, is: What ought we to do? An attempt was made to reform: that attempt has failed. It has produced a state of things very unlike what existed in the Mediæval Church, indeed, because it is at the opposite extreme. But it is a state of things not one bit more defensible than that from which it reacted. It is not in the least Apostolic. It has produced a different religious type. It has not allowed the Eucharist to work its influence. It has resulted in a condition very different indeed from that which the Reformers themselves designed. What, then, ought we to do? We are certainly not to acquiesce in the failures of an attempt made centuries ago. We must aim at further reform.

First, we must hold before ourselves the Eucharistic ideal, which is reception by the entire congregation every Lord's Day.

The problem is how to work towards that ideal. The reception of the Eucharist by the entire congregation every Lord's Day is not likely, under existing conditions, to be speedily realized. It is an ideal; but

reception is a solemn individual responsibility, to be determined by each.

How, then, are the difficulties to be met? There are, as there always have been, only two ways. The one is to substitute a different kind of Service instead of the Eucharist for those unable to receive; or else to allow the practice of non-communicating presence. History has now given us object-lessons in both. All the ancient Churches in the world allowed the latter. The English Church attempted the former. We must acknowledge that we have no cause to be satisfied with our English solution. We have had sufficient historic demonstration of its disadvantages. If the alternative lies between training Christians habitually in some other way, and training them in close proximity to the Eucharist, it is the latter we must choose, and not the former.

Comparisons are often instituted between Mattins and the Eucharist. If the first be regarded as the introduction to the second, well and good; if, as a substitute, it is indefensible. Great value is very rightly attached to the Morning Prayer, its Psalms, its Lessons, its Te Deum, its Prayers. These are sometimes favourably contrasted with the liturgical contents of the Eucharist. But even if this estimate were correct, even if the liturgical contents of Mattins were superior to that of the Eucharist, this comparison misses the whole point. For the true comparison does not consist in balancing the forms employed in one Service with those employed in the other. It consists in (*a*) the

question, What is Christ's Institution? (*b*) in the question, What is Christ's own way for pleading His own Sacrifice? (*c*) and in the question, Where is His presence specially given for that purpose? Now, the answer to all these is: the Eucharist. Therefore, even if the Eucharistic Scriptures and prayers and praises were incomparably inferior as liturgical productions to those employed at Mattins, the substantial superiority of the Eucharist would remain equally indisputable.

What is wanted is simply to carry out in full the Services for which the English Church in the Prayer-book makes provision. Our defects are largely due to failure to give expression to what is really directed. As has been already said, the Prayer-book suggests that the Eucharist shall be at the centre of English devotion; that it shall be at least every Lord's Day. Provision is made for the full choral expression of the Eucharist, just as certainly as for Mattins. It is contemplated that the Creed, the Sanctus, and the Gloria in Excelsis should be rendered with melody, just as much as that there should be melody elsewhere. The custom of singing the responses to the Commandments, which is not directed; of monotoning the Creed, which may be sung; or of singing the Creed, but not the Sanctus or the Gloria in Excelsis; the choral enhancement of the introduction to the Service, after which the choir depart and all melody is at an end: all these are failures to utilize the possessions and directions which might set the Eucharist in the centre of English devotion. But really these customs are not the fault

of the English Church's directions. They need not any of them exist.

Until the Eucharist is thus fully restored to its central place every Lord's Day in our Churches, the people are being deprived of the highest expression of worship of which the English Church is capable.

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